MARVELLOUS TIMES:

The Indian Homemaking Program and its Effects on Extension Instructors at the Extension Division, University of Saskatchewan, 1967-1972

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ABSTRACT

Because the history of Indian-White relations in Canada has focussed mainly on the colonized Indians and ignored the impact of colonization on the White colonizers, it has simplified a complex affiliation which, clearly, had an impact on both groups while reducing Indian peoples to objects to be studied. By understanding the concept of a relationship involved in colonization, we can alternatively focus on the effects colonization had on both the large and small colonizers. Not only will a study of this type allow us to emphasize the once-ignored impact of colonization on the colonizers, it will also help to avoid the over-study of the Indian peoples in Canada.

Exploring the history of the Indian Homemaking Program, Extension Division, University of Saskatchewan, 1967-1972 is an excellent venue in which to perform such a study. The program, which involves White Extension Instructors travelling to Saskatchewan reserves to teach Indian women homemaking skills such as knitting and crocheting, sewing and food preparation, promoted informal cross-cultural education in a setting that was both relaxed and enjoyable. After speaking with Extension Instructors about their vast array of experiences with respect to the program, it is abundantly clear that their days in the program, and with Indian women, changed the way they saw and experienced Saskatchewan.

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During the years of my graduate degree, many academics, friends and family members have provided me with insurmountable support which ultimately encouraged me to complete the task at hand. Thank goodness I did not have to endure this alone! My journey has not been simple and there were many, many times that I came very close to quitting -- often because 'life' just seemed to get in the way. However, these special people gently encouraged me to get back to the project. Although, the emotional, spiritual, physical and intellectual tests were, at times, overwhelming, I am pleased to report that I came through the experience a much clearer person. In hindsight, then, I am thankful.

As I stated above, many personalities have aided me along the way and I owe a debt of sincere gratitude to all of them. The danger in listing names is also risking leaving one out -- but I will take the chance in hopes that I am able to name everyone to whom I am grateful. I would like to first thank the Department of History at the University of Saskatchewan for providing me a space as a graduate student. As well, I would like to thank the Women's Studies Research Unit, University of Saskatchewan, for twice providing me with a space in which to share my research and experiences as a graduate student at the "Changing the Climate Conference" in Saskatoon. I also want to extend my sincere gratitude to Professor Hans Michelmann and Professor Norman Zlotkin for supporting me in my Fall 2001 dilemma and to the College of Graduate Studies and Research, Tonya Wirchenko and especially Acting Dean Tom Wishart, for enabling me to complete this project without penalty. I also want to thank Professor Laurence Kitzan and Professor Valerie Korinek for writing letters and advocating on my behalf, and Professor Dave De Brou for providing encouragement with the language component of the program.

I also owe a special and specific debt of gratitude to my immediate academic circle. I thank Professor J.R. Miller and Professor Lesley Biggs for sitting on my committee, Professor Dianne Hallman for agreeing to be the external examiner and, especially, Professor Valerie J. Korinek for agreeing to be my advisor. It is truly been an honour working with such well-respected academics and I appreciate your time, patience and encouragement. This thesis would not have been completed without your timely comments and suggestions.

I also want to thank the instructors of the Indian Homemaking Program themselves. Interviews with Anne Colley, Dianne (Hancock) Berg and the late Mary Hull were illuminating and provided much insight into the underpinnings of Indian-White relations. I appreciate the

time these women took in providing me with details of the program and disclosing personal stories. Any inaccuracies of the interviews are the fault of my own.

I would like to also thank Dr. Laurie Meijer Drees for supporting my interest in the genre of the Indian Homemaker -- specifically, of the Indian Homemaking Program at the University of Saskatchewan. The late Dr. Frank Laurie Barron was always supportive and believed in me as a student. I miss him dearly. Professors Lesley McBain and Brenda MacDougall have also been great sounding boards both professionally and personally. Close friend and colleague (and sister-in-reciprocity) Camie Augustus offered tender feed-back on earlier thesis-related ideas (and took advice from me as to what NOT to do in graduate school). Graduate-student colleagues Pamela Irvine and Lori Sparling-Whitebear (Co-Presidents of the elite University of Saskatchewan 'Survivor' Group) showed friendship, caring and understanding (and not to mention many laughs). Dr. Steven Hewitt and Co.'s friendship was very much appreciated as was the friendship and advice from Dr. Bruce Shepard. Dr. Inger Anderson also provided support at the final phase of the project. Dr. Valerie Korinek has been simply outstanding -- reading countless drafts and still managing to offer positive feedback and encouragement. Professor Louise Forsyth of the Department of Women's and Gender Studies, University of Saskatchewan, has also provided me with empathy in a manner that has been professional and sincere. And, finally, Dr. Georgina Taylor, close friend and mentor, has offered support both on an academic basis as well as on a personal one. Her empathy, success at 'hoop-jumping' and contagious laugh has lifted me more times than I can count. I have discovered from all of these people that sharing research and ideas can be and is a fun and responsible endeavour.

Friends and family beyond the academy have also been of great support and have encouraged me to complete this project. Long-time friend Andrea Pearson (and husband Daryl and son Aiden) provided much support and a 'place to get away from it all'. 'Big Brother' Jerred Moore also spent time going through my conclusion and offering suggestions. Good friend Darryl Feser offered ideas for titles and friendly reminders to "get it done". Friend Cameron Just provided much needed technical support throughout the many stages of the work. A special thank you to my newly found friends in the College of Law, (in particular Ruth Fafard, Violet Erasmus, Leehann Kitigawa, Holly Ward, Nicholas Cann, Sara Knowles and Ginger Siemens) who have cheered me on to the finish (and an extra-special thanks to Jerred, Holly and Leehann who came to the defence). My friend Bonnie Ish has also been invaluable as she encouraged me, many times, to stay on track and keep focussed (and settle down!) -- regardless of what else was going on in my life. I am also thankful for extended family members who have repeatedly asked "How is your thesis coming?" and listened to the developmental process.

Finally, and most importantly, I would like to thank my immediate family. My parents, Wayne and Darlene Stahl, have gone 'beyond the call' in their various aspects of support -- I

hesitate to list all of the facets for fear of leaving some out. This thesis would not have been completed without their unconditional love. I can never express enough gratitude and am continually humbled by their support. I thank them for being proud of me.

And of course, my son, Lukas Andrew Brian Stahl -- my pleasant surprise. You are the treasure of my heart, the strength in my step and the sparkle in my eye. You are the reason I strive for greatness. I am proud to say that you were never once sacrificed for Mommy's work or glory. I hope you learn from Mommy, amongst many other things, that it is easy to 'say' but much more difficult to 'be'. Lukas: this is for you.

DEDICATION

This is dedicated to my son, Lukas Andrew Brian Stahl.
Thank you for making me see what really matters and for being 'Mommy's boy'.

INTRODUCTION

Colonialism versus Post-Colonialism: A Historiographical Analysis of Indian-White[1] Scholarship in Canada

In an anniversary edition of *Saskatchewan History*, University of Saskatchewan historian Bill Waiser[2] reported and suggested that, "Recent demographic predictions suggest that the Aboriginal[3] population will constitute an increasing percentage of Saskatchewan's population and our history will be richer only when the Aboriginal experience becomes an integral part of the larger history."[4] Northern and Indian historian Ken Coates echoed Waiser's sentiments and argued that

> Over the past twenty years, dozens of monographs, hundreds of articles, and numerous conference papers and other contributions have added significantly to

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[1] I have chosen to capitalise the word White because, in the context of this thesis, I am using it as a designated ethnic group. According to Alan Anderson of the Department of Sociology, University of Saskatchewan, (28 September 2001) there is a current trend in academia to upper-case more generic terms such as White and Black to give them the same weight, as ethnic groups, as one would do for ethnic groups such as Scottish, British or Italian.

[2] It is always difficult to critique the work of the people under whom one has studied. It may, at first, come across as disrespect but, upon second examination, it is obvious that any critique clearly develops from a position of respect and admiration for that individual's work. My point here is not to merely and arbitrarily criticise the work of scholars who have taught me, but to reinforce the fact that they raised my awareness and interest in history. It also demonstrates that the history profession, much like other disciplines, is based on building upon and reacting to what others have studied. I want to thank members of the History Department at the University of Saskatchewan for exposing me to such an exciting field and encouraging me to react to what has been written - regardless of who wrote it - and for making me part of the historical process.

[3] There has been much discussion in both Indian and non-Indian communities about naming, that is, what term (i.e.: Aboriginal, Indian, Native, First Nations, Indigenous,) is appropriate. While the term First Nations seems to be fashionable, I have chosen the term Indian as my discussion will focus on those people who were registered as Indians under the 1876 *Indian Act*. When discussing the works of others, I will employ the terms in which their own work is written.

[4] Bill Waiser, "What's Next: The Future and Saskatchewan History," in *Saskatchewan History* Volume 50, Number 1, 1998: 42.

> our understanding of the Aboriginal past. Sizable gaps exists - one must, in fact, enter the standard academic codicil that 'much research remains to be done'...[5]

Like Waiser, Coates seems to be calling for more and better histories of Indian peoples. Coates further contends that, "It can only be hoped that the next few decades of historical writing on and about First Nations peoples retains the spirit, professionalism, diversity and intensity of recent scholarly investigations of indigenous history."[6] While this call for action and further integration of Indian history into Saskatchewan and Canadian history seems appropriate and logical, there are scholars, such as Russel Barsh and Patricia Monture-Angus, who gravely disagree with Waiser's and Coates' belief in increasing the amounts and intensities of Indian history.[7] These scholars contend that this current trend in a history in academe will only continue to emphasize the impact colonization, that is "the interference and imposition of non-Indian culture", values and ideals had on the colonized peoples.[8] Instead, scholars such as Barsh and Monture-Angus call for studies that explore and research the concept of colonization as a relationship: a relationship that, in fact, impacted both parties involved, regardless of their position within the hierarchy. Academics such as Barsh and Monture-Angus believe that although the colonial

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[5] Ken Coates, "Writing First Nations into Canadian History: A Review of Recent Scholarly Works" in *Canadian Historical Review* Volume 81, Number 1, March 2000: 100.

[6] *Ibid,* 114.

[7] It is important to come to the understanding, as most Saskatchewan historians have, that Indian history is not one homogenous history. All Indians did not experience the same history. Therefore, discussing 'Indian history' is a bit of a misnomer.

[8] Dorinda M. Stahl, "Moving From Colonization to Decolonization: Reinterpreting Historical Images of Aboriginal Women" in *Native Studies Review* Volume 12, Number 1, 1999: 117, n. 5.

relationship was unequal, the relationship did, nevertheless, impact the colonizing bodies and the time is long overdue to pursue these sorts of studies.

A study of the Indian Homemaking Program as sponsored by the Extension Division, University of Saskatchewan from 1967-1972, provides an excellent venue wherein a variation from these typical writings in western Canadian history can be achieved and a study of the impact of colonization on the colonizing bodies can be realized. More specifically, studying the historic program within a specific locale, culture and time, will allow us to understand the impact the colonial relationship had on its White instructors. It is hoped that the study will satisfy scholars such as Eva Mackey who have stated that, "We need to re-examine the [colonial] relationships and understand that influence, impact and effect was, indeed, reciprocal."[9] In her concept of colonial relations, Mackey does not seem to embrace the concept of equality but the concept of exchange which can occur unequally within a relationship; that is to say, both parties 'give and take' albeit to different degrees. Embracing a perspective that focuses on the impact of colonization on the colonizers, when compared and added to the previous historiography that focuses on the impact of colonization on the colonized, will reinforce Mackey's concept of a colonial relationship. This thesis will provide one side of the story which, when added to the

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[9] Eva Mackey, *The House of Difference: Cultural Politics and National Identity in Canada* (London: Routledge, 1999) 3. It seems here that Mackey is embracing the definition of reciprocal as stated in the *Gage Canadian Dictionary*, "in return, move or cause to move with an alternating backward and forward motion" (page 939). Mackey does not suggest that the definition of reciprocal is the definition of reciprocity which, as *Gage* suggests, is "the mutual action, influence or dependence" (page 939).

previous historiography of Indian-White relations in Canada, will provide a more complex and complete interpretation of Indian-White relations as a whole.[10]

Methodology

In order to fulfill Barsh's, Monture-Angus' and Mackey's call for a new perspective of scholarship that focuses on the impact colonization had on the colonizers, one must be precise when choosing secondary, and especially primary, sources.[11] In the case of the Indian Homemaking Program, I have specifically chosen to focus on the effects of the program on the three White instructors who were largely responsible for creating and delivering that program. To obtain this information, oral interviews were conducted.[12] The informants were told the nature of the research and asked questions relevant to their experiences as instructors in the program. These interviews were a pleasant and extremely informative process for the interviewer and proved to be the most important pieces of research for the thesis. However, the fact that the informants only relayed what seemed to be positive memories is an interesting aspect of the interview process and, clearly, I had no choice but to rely on those memories. It is

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[10] It is important to understand that this thesis does not seek to provide commentary on the impact of colonialism on both parties in the colonial relationship. Rather, the thesis seeks to 'fill in the gaps' and provide an analysis of the impact of colonization on the colonizing bodies which, it is hoped, will aid in balancing previous histories which focus upon the impact colonization had on the colonized. Further, it is hoped that this thesis, which is admittedly 'one-sided', will encourage subsequent graduate students to appreciate the nature of exchange of the relationship and to attempt to research aspects of history and produce works that detail the impact colonization had on both parties involved.

[11] One must deliberately chose sources that reflect the experiences and effects of colonization on the colonizers rather than on the colonized.

[12] Although no consent forms were signed, all informants gave verbal consent to include their interviews in the thesis. After the interviews were conducted, the informants did not have access to the information disclosed.

difficult to deconstruct someone else's memories of their experiences and to interpret as to what degree memory (that is, accuracy) played in the sharing of those memories. This thesis attempts to accept the stories, and deconstruct and interpret them in a manner that is respectful and reflective of some of the theoretical approaches to colonial relations.

In addition to the oral interviews, two report documents, written by two of the instructors for the Division of Extension and found in the University of Saskatchewan archives, also proved quite helpful. The first document, written in 1969, provided an overall evaluation of the program to date that acted as a measuring stick with which changes to the program, if needed, could be made. The second document, written in 1973, provided a complete evaluation of the program and included information regarding Extension's departure as facilitators of that program. These documents provided information about the program such as particulars relating to finances and the nature of the courses. The documents also included information that reflected the instructors' thoughts and feelings with respect to the program.

Although the emphasis of this thesis is to explore the impact of colonialism on the instructors, the thesis, at times, presents the view of the Indian students as reported in the "Evaluation of Homemaking Courses on Indian Reserves" documents. The evaluation was based on that "...data [were] collected by personal interviews, with Indian women who had participated in courses, [and] mailed questionnaires obtained information from both active and

non-active instructors."[13] The document also notes that the participants interviewed were randomly selected and out of the 2, 554 women who took the courses and/or acted as instructors, 121 were selected for interviews.[14] Of those 121, 101 responded -- either by completing the questionnaire or by setting up an interview.[15] The "Evaluation of Homemaking Courses on Indian Reserves" documents recorded the comments provided by Indian women, either via questionnaire or interview. It is the collection of these comments (which may have been edited by the report writers) that provides the basis for statements regarding the Indian women's reflections on the program. These statements are suggestive in nature and are meant to only provide ideas for further questioning of the program. An understanding of the impact the program had on the Indian students is best left to another researcher, as interviews of Indian women were not conducted for this thesis.[16] Also, it is important to note that these views were likely interpreted or filtered through two of the instructors of the Division of Extension. There are problems with drawing conclusions from the Indian womens' vantage point with such limited information and I recognize those limitations. Cumulatively, nevertheless, the oral interviews and the two report documents, when interpreted from the point of view of the instructors, create

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[13] "Evaluation of Homemaking Courses on Indian Reserves", 1973, 36-37.

[14] *Ibid,* 37.

[15] *Ibid.*

[16] It is imperative to reiterate that the reason interviews of Indian women were not conducted was because these interviews could not provide information relevant to the thesis which is to discover the impact the program had on the White instructors. Clearly, posing this question to Indian women would not provide as accurate a result as posing such questions to the White women themselves. Simply put, Indian women were not interviewed because this research is not directly about them.

the most interesting and accurate picture as to the impact the Indian Homemaking Program had on its instructors.[17] Clearly, memory may filter the instructors' perceptions and observations and this must be duly noted when interpreting the material.

Theorizing Identity

Trying to create this picture, however, can prove to be difficult, as the picture becomes almost immediately complicated by the intersection of culture, class and gender. It is important, then, before exploring how these terms fit into the concept of identity, to present the working definitions of these terms for the purpose of this thesis. In this thesis, I have chosen to use the term culture as a collection of habits, values, ideals that, as James Clifford states, encompasses everything in "learned group behavior from body techniques to symbolic orders".[18] Race, though, is sometimes incorrectly linked to culture and people of one particular race are often identified by their biological makeup and ancestry (such as hair and skin colour) and assumed to be a member of a certain culture.[19] The concept of race is one that is socially constructed through the identification of biological/physical characteristics. In turn, these characteristics are casually related to the moral and intellectual inferiority of the group. As Patricia Monture-Angus has noted, these comments speak directly to ideas about racism. She notes to assume that

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[17] Although I did interview the head of Extension during the program, Mr. Bob Brack, I did not find the interview especially helpful as he was not able to provide information as to the impact the program had on the instructors. During the interview, Mr. Brack admitted his limitations, which I appreciated.

[18] James Clifford, "On Collecting Art and Culture" in Simon During, ed., *The Cultural Studies Reader* (New York: Routledge, 1993) 66.

because an individual looks a certain way, they must live a certain way, is a commentary only on the observer.[20]

The concept of identity as related to culture, however, provides only one piece of the puzzle. For example, gender as well as class (the position an individual holds within the socio-economic hierarchy of society) also impacts identity.[21] What is interesting to note about the categories of culture, gender and class is how they do intersect with one another and how it is not always easy to keep them separate. In fact, the terms play off and impact the definitions of one another. For example, Patricia Monture has stated that she cannot separate the fact that she is a woman from the fact that she is a Mohawk. She writes that, "My women's identity flows from my race....I am a Mohawk woman and not a woman Mohawk".[22] She further contends that "I cannot separate what happens to me 'just because I am a woman' or 'just because I am an Indian'...my experiences...[are] layered...".[23] Historian Catherine Hall also writes about how the categories of gender and class easily intersect. She notes that it is important to question, "How was class gendered?" and "How was it different to be a man or a woman belonging to a

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[19] For example, it is sometimes assumed that someone who looks 'Indian' (whatever that means) belongs to that cultural group.

[20] Patricia A. Monture, "I Know My Name: A First Nations Woman Speaks" in Geraldine Finn, ed. *Limited Edition: Voices of Women, Voices of Feminism* (Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, 1993) 334.

[21] The 'list' is not limited to these factors, however, and can also includes factors such as age, ability and sexual orientation.

[22] Patricia A. Monture, "I Know My Name: A First Nations Woman Speaks", 334.

[23] *Ibid,* 333.

particular social class?"[24] Most recently, legal scholar Sherene Razack has noted that, "...it is vitally important to explore in a historical and site-specific way the meaning of race, economic status, class, disability, sexuality, and gender as they *come together* [emphasis added] to structure women...."[25] She also writes that "...gender and race conflate to produce an absence of the realities of Aboriginal women".[26] Finally, it is also important, as Roxana Ng says, that: "...gender, race/ethnicity and class are not fixed entities. They are socially constructed in and through productive and reproductive relationships in which we all participate".[27] As all of these scholars suggest, it is virtually impossible to separate these categories. In this thesis, then, culture, class and gender will be carefully explored and historically contextualized.[28]

Academic Mary Pratt acknowledges this complication of identity and suggests to "...use the idea of the 'contact zone' as a way of studying the meeting of cultures".[29] She further states that contact zones "...refer to social spaces where cultures meet, clash and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power, such as colonialism...."[30] The concept of the contact zone seems to fit quite nicely into the theoretical frameworkings of this

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[24] Catherine Hall, *White, Male and Middle Class: Explorations in Feminism and History* (Routledge: New York, 1992) 12.

[25] Sherene Razack, *Looking White People in the Eye*, 12.

[26] *Ibid.*

[27] Roxanna Ng,, "Sexism, Racism and Canadian Nationalism" in Sneja Gunew and Anna Yeatman, eds. *Feminism and the Politics of Difference* (Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, 1993) 207.

[28] It is important to note, as Lesley Biggs reminds me, that talk about 'race' is somewhat outdated. As I understand it, the term has been replaced by the more appropriate term of culture or cultural group. However, many academics still use the term race and their work has been employed here, nonetheless.

[29] Mary Louise Pratt, "Arts of the Contact Zone" in *Profession: The Modern Language Association of America:* 34.

thesis. Based on the research performed, the Indian Homemaking Program was clearly a social space wherein previously conceived beliefs held by the instructors regarding Indian people, and specifically Indian women, were confronted and challenged -- largely by the instructors themselves. In the case of the Indian Homemaking Program, the clashing and grappling of issues related to culture, class and gender created an opportunity for the instructors to not only learn about Indian culture but also about themselves. Pratt's concept of the contact zone seems to foster realizations related to the intersection of culture, class and gender, which ultimately add depth and complexity to the overarching theme of colonialism and its impact on the instructors.

Historiography of Indians in Canada

Before embarking on the study of the impact of Indian Homemaking Program at the University of Saskatchewan on the White instructors, however, it is worthwhile to look at the patterns of historiography of Indians in Canada and, more specifically, Saskatchewan.[31] Though a relatively new field, it is plausible to divide the historiography of western Canadian (Saskatchewan) Indian history into two separate, yet interrelated, phases of study.[32] The first phase, which lasted from the early 1970s and continued well into the 1990s, is what I have chosen to label the colonial phase of Canadian Indian history -- colonial because this first phase

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[30] *Ibid.*

[31] There are few histories specifically on Saskatchewan Indians so some of the works cited will refer to prairie Indians.

[32] Indian history exploded into the Canadian history scene in the 1970s during the social history revolution. Prior to this, Indian history was largely ignored in and by mainstream history. The social history revolution paved the way for previously ignored histories such as Indian history, regional history, labour history and women's history.

of historiography tends to focus on the impact colonialism had on the colonized bodies. This phase of historiography focuses largely on federal schemes of assimilation (such as legislation that worked toward enfranchising Indians), the coast-to-coast impact of residential schools and grand themes such as the fur trade and warfare.

For example, one of the most ground-breaking works in the colonial phase of the historiography was a work on the Indians' role in the fur trade by A.J. Ray. In his monograph, Ray argues, from an economic perspective, that Indians were "discriminating consumers" throughout the Western fur trade era and that the fur trade had an irreversible impact on their economic dependency with respect to the state.[33] Similarly, J.R. Miller's works, including thematic studies of Indian-White history in Canada and more specific studies related to residential schools, have detailed the impact such schemes have had on Indian people.[34]

Many more specific and territorial-oriented studies also point to the study of the effects of colonialism on Indian peoples. For example, one of Sarah Carter's earlier works discussed the impact western farming policies had on prairie Indians.[35] In addition, Jennifer S. Brown and

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[33] A.J. Ray. *Indians in the Fur Trade: Their Role as Hunters, Trappers and Middlemen in the Lands Southwest of Hudson Bay, 1660-1870* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974).

[34] J.R. Miller, *Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens: A History of Indian-White Relations in Canada,* 2nd Edition (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989), J.R. Miller, ed., *Sweet Promises: A Reader on Indian-White Relations in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991) and J.R. Miller, *Shingwauk's Vision: A History of Native Residential Schools* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996).

[35] Sarah Carter, *Lost Harvests: Prairie Indian Reserves Farmers and Government Policy* (Montreal: McGill-Queens, 1990).

Sylvia Van Kirk both have detailed the prominent role of Indian and Metis women in the fur trade and the effect of the trade on their positions within their respective communities.[36]

What is particularly interesting about this colonial phase of historiography is the vivid reaction it raised from academics beyond the historical profession, largely scholars of Indian ancestry, who were trained in fields such as sociology, anthropology and law. One issue that Indian scholars brought to attention was that the authors of much of the historiography produced to date were largely of non-Indian descent. The reaction from the Indian community on what can be referred to as the 'appropriation of voice' has encouraged Indian people to tell their own histories and incorporate their traditions of oral history into those stories. As Maria Campbell has reminded me, "My people are articulate enough to tell their own stories".[37] Similarly James Clifford writes, "'Native informants' could now speak for themselves to 'us' without...mediation...."[38] For example, Western Canadian Indian histories written by Leonard Bloomfield, Edward Ahenakew and Jack Funk, and Gordon Lobe have opened the doors for Indian people to record their histories.[39] These unique ways of writing histories have

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[36] J.S.H. Brown, *Strangers in Blood: Fur Trade Company Families in Indian Country* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1980) and Sylvia Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties: Women in Fur-Trade Society, 1670-1870* (Winnipeg: Watson and Dwyer, 1980).

[37] Maria Campbell, Native Studies 309.6 lecture, University of Saskatchewan, 10:00am, 14 July 1995.

[38] Clifford, "On Collecting Art and Culture," 66.

[39] See Leonard Bloomfield, *Sacred Stories of the Sweet Grass Cree* (Saskatoon: Fifth House Publishers, 1993), Edward Ahenakew, *Voices of the Plains Cree* (Regina: Canadian Plains Research Centre, 1995) and Jack Funk and Gordon Lobe, eds., *"...And They Told Us Their Stories": A Book of Indian Stories* (Saskatoon: Saskatoon Tribal Council, 1991).

undoubtedly added immensely to ways in which we understand history and have undoubtedly contributed toward placing histories by, for and about Indians in mainstream discourse.

Another, yet clearly different, reaction to the colonial phase of history was by scholars who collectively argued that studying the impact of colonialism on Indians would only continue to marginalize Indians in academe and verify their disadvantaged position within the colonial hierarchy. These post-colonial scholars, that is, scholars that acknowledge and promote the two-way nature of the colonial relationship, have not only called for increased studies on the impact of colonization on the colonizers, but have criticized the nature of the colonial phase of scholarship and have acknowledged the complexities inherent within the post-colonial phase.[40] Post-colonial scholars believe in moving beyond the notion of rigid categories and studying specific historical cases that explore the intersection of culture, class and gender within those cases and claim that such categories are not fixed but dependent upon the historical circumstances.[41] For example, Patricia Monture-Angus, a Mohawk academic, legal scholar and colonial theorist, has reinforced in her work that colonialism is indeed a relationship, albeit an unequal one, and that studies involving the impact of this relationship on the colonizers are imperative to the overall understanding of Canadian history. She writes:

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[40] As Homi K Bhabha writes, "Postcolonial perspectives emerge from the colonial testimony". See "The Postcolonial and the Postmodern" (page 190) in Simon During, ed. *The Cultural Studies Reader* (New York: Routledge, 1993).

[41] See page 20 of this thesis for a further discussion on Monture-Angus' analogy of a spider web to discuss the complicated relations involved in colonialism.

> This other often forgotten part of the relationship of colonialism is the colonizer. I use the word relationship purposefully because colonialism is now, in the 1990s, more the "stuff" between people(s) than it is a policy or practice. It is impossible to have the historic and present-day colonized without having those who have the will (and the perceived right) to continue to create colonial relations. Where are the studies...on the colonizers?[42]

In this quotation, Monture-Angus is clearly stating the obvious: one cannot have a colonized without a colonizer. Furthermore, the colonizers' role in this relationship, and the power they hold, needs to be explored. Monture-Angus is not the only academic who has called attention to the copious number of studies done on First Nations people. Legal scholar Sheldon Cardinal of St. Thomas University, New Brunswick, noted in a 1999 Keynote Address that, "Excuse me for saying this, but we are sick to death of being studied."[43]

Anthropologists such as Russel Barsh have been aware of the over study of Canadian Indians for quite some time:

> Anthropologists, in particular, have identified with the victims of racism and imperialism [colonialism]...while this is to be

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[42] Patricia Monture-Angus, "Considering Colonialism and Oppression: Aboriginal Women, Justice and the 'Theory' of Decolonization" in *Native Studies Review* Volume 12, Number 2, 1999: 80. I acknowledge that there have been studies of colonizing bodies in Canadian history. See F.L. Barron, *Walking in Indian Moccasins: The Native Policies of Tommy Douglas and the CCF* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1997), John Leslie and Ron Maguire, eds., *The Historical Development of the Indian Act* (Ottawa: Treaties and Historical Research Centre, 1978), John Sheridan Milloy, *A National Crime: The Canadian Government and the Residential School System, 1879-1986* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1999) and Brian E. Titley, *A Narrow Vision: Duncan Campbell Scott and the Administration of Indian Affairs* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1986). Although these works have studied the colonizers, I believe their emphasis still remains on the effects the colonizers had on the colonized.

[43] Sheldon Cardinal, Keynote Address, Humanities Conference, Fredericton, New Brunswick, October 1999.

> welcomed morally, it ironically may lead anthropologists to limit their study to victims, rather than studying the victimizers.[44]

He further contends that "More has been written about the effects of oppression on Indians than about the causes of their oppression, and more about the cultures of the victims than about the organization of their victimizers."[45]

Some scholars, such as historian James Axtell, have also criticized the colonial phase of scholarship and believes that the focus on the impact of colonialism on Indians, or the victims, has not boded well for Indian history. He contends that the emphasis on the effects of colonialism on Indians is perhaps *en vogue* in historians' circles. He sees the historical profession being somewhat fickle and that it "...rolls over for the latest and least fad."[46] He concludes that, "In short, the texts reflect our 'deep-seated tendency' to see Whites and Indians as possessing two distinct species of historical experience rather than a mutual history of continuous interaction and influence."[47]

Historian Sarah Carter also acknowledges problems associated with studying the impact of colonialism on the colonized and argues that this increased focus on the study of Indian history has contributed to what she sees to be colonial divisions and has, more specifically, protected the role of the colonizer. In her recent monograph, Carter suggests that the idea of

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[44] Russel Barsh, "Anthropology and Indian Hating", in *Native Studies Review* Volume 12, Number 2, 1999: 4.
[45] *Ibid.*
[46] James Axtell, "Colonial America Without the Indians" in *Beyond 1492: Encounters in Colonial North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991) 222.
[47] *Ibid.*

emphasizing Aboriginal history, and in particular the role of Indians as active agents in that history rather than victims to colonialism, has become a "colonialist alibi."[48] She further questions if "...evidence of Native resilience and strength [have been used] to soften, and at times deny, the impact of colonialism, and thus, implicitly, to absolve its perpetrators? Have scholars gone too far in stressing agency, and in the course of this have they overlooked or downplayed the resourcefulness, ingenuity, motives and initiatives and strategies of the Euro-Canadian side?"[49]

Similarly Mackey found that "...these historical relationships have been interpreted and re-shaped within a national tradition in order to create a mythology of White settler innocence, a mythology that exists in various forms today."[50] She also states that "Aboriginal people are necessary players in nationalist myths: they are the colourful recipients of benevolence, the necessary 'others' who reflect back White Canada's self-image of tolerance."[51] She further states:

> From the early days of Canadian historical writing, historians liked to portray the colonizers of Canada as more generous than those of the USA. According to these histories, while the Americans violently and brutally conquered their "Indians", the Native peoples of Canada never suffered similar horrors of conquest....Of interest to me in these claims is not so much their truth-value, but rather the way in which they indicate a push to construct a settler national identity perceived as innocent of racism. While it is true that to a certain extent early Canadian historical writing treated

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[48] Sarah Carter, *Aboriginal Peoples and Colonizers of Western Canada to 1900* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999) 10.

[49] *Ibid.*

[50] Mackey, *The House of Difference*, 26.

[51] *Ibid*, 2.

> Native people "respectfully" and gave them a prominent role (Trigger 1986: 316), this "respect" did not result from any natural Canadian form of tolerance. It emerged because of the essential role Native people played in the early years of the colonial project.[52]

There is also the position that studies for and about Indians maintain and reinforce their marginalization in the academy and the concept of other.[53] For example, Mackey also states that the "...focus on other relegates these positions to the periphery of academia."[54] Saskatchewan Indian Federated College Cree historian Winona Stevenson agrees.[55] She stated that: "They [White academics] fear what they don't understand and so they 'other' Indigenous voices right out of their own history."[56] An example that is often used to articulate the concept of othering are Native or Indian Studies programs themselves.[57] While such specific programs do dedicate and preserve a space for Aboriginal scholarship for, by and about Indians, it is easy to argue that such programs also relegate Aboriginal scholarship, reality and identity to a space that mainstream disciplines within the academy do not or need not access. In such cases many argue that

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[52] *Ibid*, 25.

[53] I adopted the term 'by, for and about' from the Women's Studies Research Unit, University of Saskatchewan who used it as one of the premises for their conference in the Summer of 2001 on the 'Lived Environments of Girls and Women'.

[54] Mackey, *The House of Difference*, 3.

[55] Winona's last name has since been changed to Wheeler.

[56] Winona Stevenson, "Indigenous Voices, Indigenous Histories Part 1: The Othering of Indigenous History" in *Saskatchewan History* Volume 50, Number 2, Fall 1998: 24.

[57] While some universities choose to use the term Indian Studies and some Native Studies, the difference is merely in terminology rather than content.

separation, rather than integration, becomes even more profound when there is a focus upon only one aspect of the colonial relationship.

Anthropologist Russel Barsh also argues against further studies of Indian Peoples, which he believes maintain colonial divisions within the academy by continuing to oppress them by the fact that they are studied as objects.[58] Barsh writes that academics "...avoid direct observations of the causes of oppression and racism since that would require fieldwork among the oppressors. Elite classes and dominant cultures may be less amenable to being studied than the poor, who have little choice in the manner."[59]

However, Barsh concludes that this focus in anthropology on the victims of colonization is changing. He notes that although "...anthropologists have not, for the most part, turned their lens on the institutions of power that exist within their home societies"[60] and argues that:

> ...they [academics] have experienced rejection and marginalization within primitive societies rather than absolution or solidarity. Reluctant to study up, and more and more denied access to studying down, they are turning to studying themselves. The past twenty years of anthropological writing have witnessed a trend towards self-reflection...[61]

Although rare, there are cases of historical study that mirror Barsh's observations and that focus on self-reflection with respect to the colonizers in the colonial relationship. For example,

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[58] Since history, and in particular cultural history (of which this is a work) seems to becoming increasingly more interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary in nature, it seems only natural and relevant to look to other disciplines and academics (such as anthropologist Russel Barsh) for guidance and support.

[59] Barsh, "Anthropology and Indian Hating", 7.

[60] *Ibid.*

Barsh notes that, "There is a small but growing literature on the cultures of Western bureaucracies, chiefly social-welfare agencies".[62] Historians now acknowledge the wealth of information these histories have if unveiled *in relation to* rather than *in isolation from* the colonized peoples in a refreshing and innovative manner. For example, womens' historian Kathryn Bridge does an excellent job of incorporating this new approach to history into her recent work.[63] Her research focuses on the impact that colonialism had on four White women experiencing the Canadian west during the settlement era. She states in her "Introduction" that, "The women were...selected because their voices reflect different aspects of colonial history. Each of their accounts offers insight into the underpinning of Native-White relations."[64]

In addition, Carter's recent monograph also does a good job of looking at the relationship of the colonizer and the colonized and the impact that relationship had on the former body. One of her basic premises is that images of White women were constructed in relation to images of Aboriginal women.[65] She further suggests that "...any generalization about colonialism and its consequences is likely to be invalid. We must examine specific locales, specific cultures at

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[61] *Ibid.*

[62] *Ibid.* For example, see Susan Wright, "Anthropology: Still the Uncomfortable Discipline?" in *The Future of Anthropology: Its Relevance to the Contemporary World,* ed. Akbar Ahmed and Cris Shore, (London and Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Athlone, 1995), pages 65-92.

[63] Kathryn Bridge, *By Snowshoe, Buckboard and Steamer: Women of the Frontier* (Victoria: Sono Nis Press, 1998) 12.

[64] *Ibid,*

[65] Sarah Carter, *Capturing Women: The Manipulation of Cultural Imagery in Canada's Prairie West* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1997).

specific times."[66] Her study of images of Indian and non-Indian women in the Canadian prairies successfully accomplishes this.

What works especially well in this post-colonial phase with works by both Bridge and Carter is that they do not reduce the history of contact to oppressed and oppressor, Indian and White or colonized and colonizer. In fact, they both detail the complexity of the history of contact -- acknowledging how the intersection of descriptors of identity, complicate interpretations of history.[67] Historian Joy Parr calls these polarized concepts "galloping pairs" and argues for the need to move beyond limiting our study of history to such polarized ideologies.[68] Similarly, Franca Iacovetta and Mariana Valverde suggest that "The historical past is far too complex, and people's lives shot through with too many contradictions and ambiguities, to be easily captured by this tired dichotomy of top-down domination versus bottom-up resistance."[69] The history of contact, and hence colonialism, is just as complex. In fact, Monture-Angus contends that, "Colonialism is no longer a linear, vertical relationship-colonizer does to colonized -- it is a horizontal and entangled relationship (like a spider web)".[70] This web

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[66] *Ibid,* 11.

[67] I am referring, here, to factors such as culture, class and gender.

[68] Joy Parr, *The Gender of Breadwinners: Women, Men and Change in Two Industrial Towns 1880-1950* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990) 12.

[69] Franca Iacovetta, and Mariana Valverde, "Introduction" in Franca Iacovetta, and Mariana Valverde, eds., *Gender Conflicts: New Essays in Women's History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992) xviii.

[70] Patricia Monture-Angus, *Journeying Forward: Dreaming First Nations Independence* (Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, 1998) 11.

of colonialism, as Monture-Angus calls it, does not and cannot be represented by polarized terms.

One of the complexities brought to light in this post-colonial phase is the varied roles and positions within the colonial relationship. In the 1960s, Memmi argued that between the polarized interpretations of the colonized and the colonizer is the small colonizer. Memmi conceptualized the colonial structure as a hierarchical one and placed the role of the small colonizer beneath the role of the colonizer and above the role of the colonized. He further argued that the privilege of the small colonizer is always relative -- the small colonizer exudes power over the colonized but yet is also victimized by the colonizer.[71]

Other historians have employed Memmi's concept into their interpretations of aspects of Canadian history. For example, historian Georgina M. Taylor, has drawn on Memmi's concept of the small colonizer, and has argued that Violet McNaughton, a prairie settler who was eventually one of the leading farm women in Canada, was herself a small colonizer. Taylor contends that as a small colonizer, McNaughton "suffered herself from the way the West was structured, but at the same time closed her eyes to the treatment of Aboriginal Peoples, and was 'seriously fooled' by her own naivete and blinded by history."[72] Taylor, drawing on Memmi and using McNaughton as an example, argues that the role of the small colonizer floats somewhere

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[71] Albert Memmi, *The Colonizer and the Colonized* (Boston: Beacon Press Books, 1965) 10-13.

[72]Georgina M. Taylor, "Ground for Common Action: Violet McNaughton's Agrarian Feminism and the Origins of the Farm Women's Movement in Canada", Ph.D. diss., Carleton University, 1997, pages 513-521.

between the role of the colonized and the colonizer, and that sometimes the small colonizer is privileged when juxtaposed to the colonized, but may simultaneously be oppressed, when juxtaposed to the colonizer.[73]

This concept of the small colonizer relates quite nicely to the complexity of Whiteness as suggested by academic Eva Mackey. She suggests that when studying colonialism, a discussion of Whiteness is often appropriate and can sometimes explain the complicated relative relationships that derive from it. She contends that: "power in such colonial relations is often derived largely from where one is situated in the colonial hierarchy" and that Whiteness is key to understanding these fluctuating positions of power.[74] Mackey argues the concept of Whiteness, or a homogenous group of White people, has aided in securing power over non-White people. Mackey states that

> The power of whiteness is embodied precisely in the way that it becomes normative, in how it "colonises the definition of normal" (Dyer 1988: 45)....This model is defined not by any particular characteristics, but by its difference from (and often its ability to tolerate) other marked Canadian identities such as multicultural-Canadian, Native-Canadian or French-Canadian. The state of being unmarked (and therefore 'normal' or 'ordinary') is both constitutive of, and an effect of, structural advantage and power, and the cultural authority that that power brings.[75]

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[73] For the purposes of this thesis, I conceive the stereotypical colonizer as typically White, upper class men that hold positions of power in government, such as Duncan Campbell Scott.

[74] Mackey, *House of Difference,* 21.

[75] *Ibid.*

She further states that, "Unlike marginal groups, 'whites' are rarely thought of as an homogenous category, in part because 'whiteness' secures its dominance by seeming not to be anything in particular."[76] However, not all White people are the same nor do they occupy similar positions of power in society. Rather, the power and privilege of White people is circumscribed by class, gender, age and sexual orientation.[77] For example, she states, using definitions employed by Ruth Frankenburg, that:

> 'Ordinary Canadians' are most often white....To study 'whiteness' is not to suggest that all white people are the same, or that whiteness is a biologically relevant category. Ruth Frankenburg suggests that 'whiteness' has three interlinked dimensions. First, she argues that whiteness is a location of "structural advantage, of race privilege". Second, it is a "standpoint", a place from which "white people look at ourselves, at others and at society". Finally, whiteness refers to a "set of cultural practices that are usually unmarked and unnamed".[78]

Similarly, Berkhofer contends that in history, White people are not usually described or seen as having an identity and that the focus on identity has been relegated to non-mainstream individuals and groups. For example, Berkhofer suggests that frequently "...only people of colour have race and only women have gender, only lesbians and gays have sexual orientation - everyone else is a human being."[79] Sherene Razack agrees. She states that, "...the colonized possess a series of knowable characteristics and can be studied, known, and managed

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[76] *Ibid.*

[77] Of course, power is not limited by only these factors.

[78] *Ibid.*

accordingly by the colonizers whose own complicity remains masked".[80] The time has come to acknowledge aspects of culture, gender and class within the dominant society.[81]

Ideas related to Whiteness, identity and the ways in which these aspects are central to historical relationships and events seems to work well within the newly (and perhaps loosely) defined boundaries of what has become known as cultural history. While its predecessor, social history, seemed to focus on the 'three pillars' of race, gender and class and how one of these identities effect interpretations of history, cultural history seems to focus on the interplay between the categories and the inability to claim one 'pillar' as more influential than the others. Cultural history has also acknowledged other 'pillars' such as age, sexual orientation, education and location and how they also contribute to interpretations of history.[82] While social history focussed on interpreting history from a perspective of gender, class or race and assumed that those categories were largely fixed, cultural history assumes that such categorizations are historically constructed, malleable and hence historically specific to each cultural event, product or circumstance.[83] Furthermore, historians such as Valerie Korinek see the field of cultural history as the "...the art of 'deconstructing' or 'unpacking' meaning...." from cultural texts,

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[79] Robert Berkhofer, *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian From Columbus to the Present* (New York: Knopf, 1978) 179.

[80] Razack, *Looking White People in the Eye*, 10.

[81] It is important to remember that culture and gender are formative of class.

[82] I first learned of the three pillars of Social History from David De Brou in History 221.6 (The History of Canadian-American relations) in my second year as an undergraduate.

[83] Social history, then, produced works in the 1970s that were categorized, for example, as 'womens' history', 'working peoples' history' and 'Indian history'.

productions or organizations.[84] Cultural history provides an exciting and innovative window to the past that allows us a more complex understanding of our histories and promotes the inclusion of complicated issues such as identity, Whiteness and the concept of shifting privilege within a perceived social hierarchy.

It is in the spirit of cultural history, with its emphasis on concepts and themes of identity, Whiteness and positions of privilege, that this thesis is written. Chapter one, entitled, "Preparation and Participation: The Logistics of the Indian Homemaking Program, College of Extension, University of Saskatchewan, 1967-1972" provides an overview of the history of the Division of Extension as well as a history of the initiation and commencement of the Indian Homemaking Program. This chapter also introduces the three Extension instructors, the roles each played in the program and the courses they taught. Ultimately, the chapter provides the historical context of the program and the instructors.

"Tales of Travels: 'Road Stories' of Program Instructors", the second chapter, looks at some of the entertaining and interesting stories and anecdotes that happened to the instructors on the way to their courses. The chapter, which is full of stories of fun and adventure, demonstrates the impact the program, that is to say the instructors' jobs, had on their lives. The instructors admitted that they would not have been able to have the travelling experiences, nor the relationships they fostered with one another, had it not been for the program. This chapter, then,

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[84] Valerie J. Korinek, *Roughing it in the Suburbs: Reading Chatelaine Magazine in the Fifties and Sixties* (Toronto:

outlines the impact the program had on their occupational experiences and on their personal relationships.

The impact of the program on the instructors is also reflected in chapter Three, "Powerful Lessons: Effects of the Program on its Instructors". This chapter of the thesis critically examines the deep and long-lasting impact the program had on the instructors in relation to their Indian students. The chapter discusses how the instructors were directly impacted from their experiences of teaching on Indian reserves. For example, the chapter discusses ways in which preconceived stereotypes of Indian peoples, and specifically Indian women, were confronted and challenged.

"Passing the Grade, Passing the Torch and Passing Away: The Success and Demise of the Program", the last chapter of the work, details the closure of the program and the effects closing the program had on its instructors and the way in which the program was taken over by Indians themselves. It also postulates some reasons, from the viewpoint of the instructors, as to why the program failed.

Finally, the conclusion "Continuing Post-Colonial Studies," reiterates the most prominent theme: the need to focus on the impact of colonization on the instructors in the program rather than on the Indian students. The purpose of this, the conclusion argues, is clear: focussing on the impact of the program on the students, or the colonized, would only be counterproductive as it

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University of Toronto Press, 2000) 17.

would promote and reinforce the types of scholarship that the thesis is primarily working against. The conclusion also identifies major themes raised in the thesis. In particular, it discusses issues surrounding the study of colonization, such as the instructors' role as 'benevolent colonizers', that is people who occupy privileged positions within a social hierarchy and have a genuine affection for their subordinates, and the complexities associated in and with that role.[85] The conclusion also points out that the instructors' position within the social hierarchy was often in flux as it was always relative to their specific circumstances: sometimes they were privileged, and sometimes they were not. The conclusion also draws parallels between the role of the instructors as benevolent colonizers to other historical figures in the Canadian colonial relationship such as church missionaries, and identifies similarities between those two very distinct, yet similar, roles.[86] Also, the conclusion discusses the nature of the contact zone within the Indian Homemaking Program and the uniqueness of that space and discusses ways in which identity, and specifically the aspect of Whiteness, complicate the interpretation of this history and how categories of gender, culture and class interact within that space. Finally, the conclusion calls for more work to be done in the spirit, angle and approach in which the thesis was written and, once again, suggests that such works, when added to previous historiography, will promote a greater and more complete understanding of the colonial relationship within the context of history.

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[85] A term which was suggested to me by Lesley Biggs. I wish to thank Professor Biggs for this most appropriate term and find it much more appropriate and employable than 'small colonizers'.

[86] The conclusions will also briefly discuss missionaries who worked in residential schools.

Although the task at hand promises to be difficult, it is ultimately hoped that interpreting the study of the Indian Homemaking Program as an aspect of colonialism, focussing on the themes of identity, Whiteness and privilege, and analyzing the impact the program had on the White instructors will provide an interesting perspective into the colonial relationship as revealed in the minutiae of everyday life. The case of the Indian Homemaking Program, then, seeks to illustrate the complexities of the relationship of culture, class and gender in the lives of women in modern day Saskatchewan.

CHAPTER ONE

Preparation and Participation: The History and Logistics of the Indian Homemaking Program, Extension Division, University of Saskatchewan, 1967-1972

Before embarking on a study of the effect and impact the Indian Homemaking Program had on its White instructors and the role they held in the larger system of colonization, it is important to understand the history of the Extension Division as well as the conception and creation of the Indian Homemaking Program. Placing the history, logistics and personalities of the program into context provides us with a more solid base on which the program can be analyzed. It will also demonstrate that the program fulfilled many separate, yet interrelated, interests of the many players involved.

The University of Saskatchewan was founded in 1907 and was "...developed as a university that was state supported but not state controlled."[1] Dr. W.C. Murray, the first president of the newly formed University of Saskatchewan, established the philosophy and mandate of the newly-founded university. His address to the Convention of the Agricultural Societies, which was held in Regina in 1909, was Murray's first opportunity to outline the roles and responsibilities of "The People's University."[2] "A University," Murray reported again in

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[1] Michael Hayden, *Seeking a Balance: The University of Saskatchewan, 1907-1982* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia, 1983) xvi.

[2] Dr. L.C. Paul, "Retrospect and Prospect: History of Extension, University of Saskatchewan" (Saskatoon: University of Saskatchewan, 1970) 40.

1912, 1913 and 1914, "...created by the people, supported and controlled by the people cannot afford to neglect the chief interest of the people."[3] He further stated that:

> We should have a university that will leave no calling, no sphere of life untouched; a university that is as broad in sympathy as these wide plains, as deep in richness as this marvellous soil, and as stimulating in spirit as the breeze which sweeps over our fields.[4]

Some of this vision of the University of Saskatchewan was fulfilled through the Division of Extension and this work began almost immediately. F.H. Auld, the Superintendent of Affairs and Institutes, was appointed as Head of the Extension Division in 1910.[5]

For the first year of their existence, Extension programs were limited to agriculture courses in rural communities which were largely populated by White immigrant male farmers and their families. However, "Extension reached the womens' clubs of the province through the organization of Homemakers' Clubs."[6] This work soon became quite extensive, and "between 1913 and 1930...Abigail DeLury directed the Homemakers Clubs [and] brought practical information and comfort to women throughout the province through travels and the annual meetings held in the summer on the university campus."[7] For example, "Homemaker work concentrated on holding meetings that provided human contacts and taught basic skills to farm wives. Butter and cheese making and the importance of these two foods and eggs in the diet was

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[3] *Ibid.*
[4] *Ibid.*
[5] Hayden, *Seeking a Balance*, 68.
[6] *Ibid.*
[7] *Ibid.*

emphasized. Gardening and tree-planting was encouraged [and]...[f]ruit and vegetable preservation."[8] These "...[short courses]...were given in Prince Albert, Rosthern, Regina and Saskatoon, but these activities were unorganized; they usually took place in response to requests from the centres made directly to members of the faculty."[9] "A common method of carrying on extension work was by means of short courses of from two days to two weeks."[10] Short courses did not "carry credit towards a degree."[11]

The phenomena of Extension and its short courses carried an additional subtle emphasis on 'self-help'. Extension believed that "... the emphasis on self-help was a basic desire to get people to recognize their problems before they became serious."[12] It seemed that Extension saw themselves as help-mates to often less fortunate, non-university educated people, and saw their programs as the answers to the problems, and challenges, faced by rural society. It also appears that Extension placed the responsibility of problem-solving on its individual students rather than acknowledging that the problems were systemic and societal in nature. "Ideally," it was thought, "Extension should be working itself out of a job -- people would recognize and solve their own problems."[13]

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[8] *Ibid,* 124.
[9] *Ibid.*
[10] W.P. Thompson, *The University of Saskatchewan: A Personal History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970) 90.
[11] *Ibid.*
[12] Paul, "Retrospect and Prospect", 45.
[13] *Ibid,* 46.

Extension seemed to reflect some popular attitudes of the time -- one of which was the desire for formal education. Rather than looking at factors such as economics, geography, class and ruralism as factors contributing to problem-solving queries, Extension put its "...focus...entirely on education so that people could achieve a greater knowledge, develop new attitudes, learn new skills."[14] Embedded within this aspect of education was the concept of modernity, another common ideology of post-war Canada, which placed an emphasis on, "the modern woman who wishe[d] to participate in Canada's economic, social and cultural growth."[15] For stay-at-home wives, modernity often included the acquiring of skills and goods related to homemaking.[16] Sewing machines, materials and many of the latest appliances were thought to represent people who were educated and appreciated modern conveniences. Unfortunately, though, as Valerie J. Korinek discusses, this post-war "...revolution did not involve a challenge to the almost exclusive relegation of housework to women. Instead, it advocated that women simplify their routines - eliminating overly fastidious routines, purchasing upgraded appliances, and implementing planned shopping and menu plans."[17] Rather than freeing women from domestic labour, this emphasis on education and modernity seemed to tie them to it more tightly, albeit in a slightly different manner.

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[14] *Ibid,* 40.

[15] For a further discussion of modernity, see Valerie J. Korinek, *Roughing It in the Suburbs: Reading Chatelaine Magazine in the Fifties and Sixties* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000) 76.

[16] *Ibid,* 106. Korinek notes that "...modernization was equated with a consumer paradise of products for home and family."

[17] *Ibid,* 197.

For women, typically the wives of the male trainees, instruction featured these homemaking and domestic skills in the form of nutrition, gardening, food preservation, sewing and mending, knitting and crocheting. Tips and hints on interior decorating were also included. These sorts of courses ran in predominantly White communities from 1962-1967. However, in the middle to late 1960s, a drastic shift seemed to occur in the numbers and amounts of short courses held in these communities. It seemed that electricity and the phenomenon of television displaced the need served by Extension. As historian Hayden notes, although "...university sponsored lectures...were in demand into the 1960's...the number declined rapidly because television was taking away the audience."[18] Until the 1960s, Extension played a highly important educational, social and entertainment-focussed role in the lives of many Saskatchewan people who were either settlers or their direct descendants.

Just as White Saskatchewan communities were beginning to lose interest in Extension short courses during the late 1960s, prairie Indian communities began to display an interest in such programs. For example, in 1965, some of the women of the James Smith Reserve near Kinistino, Saskatchewan, sent a request to the University of Saskatchewan for instructors from the Division of Extension to instruct them in the same manner and with the same programs their White neighbours were receiving.[19] In a timely fashion, Extension responded to the call put forth by the Indian community and established a pilot short course on the same reserve. Extension

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[18] Hayden, *Seeking a Balance*, 68-69.

took the invitation of Indian communities asking for assistance as a key and pivotal opportunity to introduce them to and educate them about White, middle class domestic ideals and values.

However, these short courses soon became problematic for two separate, yet interrelated reasons: first, was the issue of culture. Extension did not seem to understand cultural and class differences between the instructors and the students. Extension failed to acknowledge the fact that their courses were designed by and for White middle class citizens -- people who had money to purchase supplies and, in some cases, the machines with which they could practise and even master their newly acquired skills. Also, it seems the call for Indian short courses by Indian communities allowed Extension to fulfill their own urban, professional agenda of educating the disadvantaged; in this case, Indians, into what they considered to be a better way of life complete with cultural values that mirrored urban White society. For example, the "Evaluation of Homemaking Courses on Indian Reserves" listed some of the short and long term objectives:

> ...participants learn...the basics of good nutrition, and how to choose, buy, prepare, and store foods safely in the home...participants learn to evaluate quality in ready-made clothing, and through home construction produce clothing for the family...participants learn to develop good housekeeping habits related to cleanliness and thus to better health in the family...participants learn to make more rational decisions in the use of time, energy and money...[20]

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[19] "Evaluation of Homemaking Courses on Indian Reserves", 1969 (Extension Division, University of Saskatchewan, 1969) 1. For clarification, there were two reports written - one in 1969 and one in 1973.

[20] "Evaluation of Homemaking Courses on Indian Reserves", 1973, 6-7.

It seems that Extension felt they were doing Indian women a favour by instructing them on White habits, values and ideals.

For Indian women, the short courses fulfilled a slightly different purpose from that of other Extension courses. Based on data collected from questionnaires, the "Evaluation of Homemaking Courses on Indian Reserves" found that Indian women wanted to share and partake in the popular culture of the late 1960s via the education of Extension -- they wanted the same opportunities as their White counterparts.[21] However, for Indian women, it is possible that taking the courses did not necessarily mean totally adapting to, or totally becoming a part of, mainstream White culture. Rather, they were attracted to modernity and entertainment. For example, in the "Evaluation of Homemaking Programs on Indian Reserves", the document cites that Indian women reported they took the courses for reasons such as, "To meet people; make friends; be with women; to learn; to exchange ideas; curiosity; [and] enjoyment".[22] It seems that the Indian women were looking more for what F.L. Barron refers to as integration. Barron notes that "Integration implied Native people would be participants in mainstream society, fully

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[21] "Evaluation of Homemaking Courses on Indian Reserves", 1969, 28. It is important to note that this is only the document's perception of why Indian women called for the program. This perception is based upon a questionnaire that was distributed to Indian women after the course that asked them to disclose their reasons for enrollment. Obviously, there are problems with interpreting a document in which the information was gathered from a questionnaire and interpreted in the original document by the original authors. It is highly likely that the variety of reasons why Indian women opted for taking these courses cannot be fully gleaned from this document. However, for the purposes of this thesis, the document's perception of the Indian women's point of view will be employed -- with an acknowledgment of its limitations.

[22] *Ibid.*

enjoying all the social services and individual political rights others took for granted, all the while enjoying their own cultural integrity and collective rights as Aboriginals."[23]

It is also interesting to note that the Indian initiative for integration, grounded in and by education, is not a new phenomenon in Western Canadian history. In fact, this was very much true with respect to education during the Numbered Treaty Negotiations in the late 1800s. As J.R. Miller so eloquently argues it was clear that Indians "...wanted not assimilation but schooling."[24] But, as J.R. Miller notes, education was and is not necessarily always confined to schooling. He suggests that "Education aims, first, to explain to the individual members of a community who they are, who their people are, and how they relate to other peoples and to the physical world around them."[25] In other words, education is a mechanism with which forge individual and collective identity. Moreover, education provides the necessary skills to maintain that identity. Miller states:

> Second, an educational system seeks to train young people in the skills they will need to be successful and productive members of their bands, city-states, countries or empires in later life. These skills include an ability to procreate and preserve the community, to sustain the group's life through the provision of foodstuffs and other material things, to answer questions of everyday life and allay anxieties, and, finally, to defend the group against external

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[23] F. L. Barron, *Walking in Indian Moccasins: The Native Policies of Tommy Douglas and the CCF* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia, Press, 1997) xix.

[24] J.R. Miller, *Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens: A History of Indian-White Relations in Canada* 2nd Edition (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991) 70.

[25] J.R. Miller, *Shingwauk's Vision: A History of Native Residential Schools* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996) 13.

> threats, whether from different human communities or other source.[26]

It seems, then, that there is an historical pattern of Indian people looking for educational opportunities. In the case of the Indian Homemaking Program, it is likely that Indian women went to the Extension Division as a source of good education because this is what they observed to be the custom in neighbouring White communities. The fact that Indian communities had virtually no relationship with the Division of Extension until the 1960s did not appear to be a reason for them not seeking these educational opportunities.

Although it seems that Indian women wanted to partake in some of the activities in which their White counterparts had, it also appears that the courses also offered an alternative or escape from the living and social conditions on Saskatchewan reserves.[27] For example, the document also recorded that the Indian women reported that, there was "Much unrest [and] dissatisfaction with the present conditions and lack of opportunities on reserves" and that there was a "breakdown of many families".[28] Some women also reported that drinking habits on the reserves had gotten "much worse" and that there was an overall "lack of cooperation [and] lack of responsibility" on reserves.[29] The evaluation document recorded that one woman took the courses: "To get out and away from [my] daily routine".[30] As Helen Buckley notes, economic

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[26] *Ibid.*

[27] The emphasis here is not to draw a sociological profile of conditions on-reserve or even to explain and analyze these conditions but to simply describe them.

[28] *Ibid,* 33-34.

[29] *Ibid,* 35-36.

[30] "Evaluation of Homemaking on Indian Reserves", 1969, 28.

conditions on reserves in the post-war era were poor due to a decreased demand for workers on non-Indian farms, resulting from increased mechanization and low education levels.[31] Some families living on reserves were able to live self-sufficient lives, some found work in hunting and trapping, but most needed the support of government-funding agencies.[32] Clearly, as Buckley notes, "...it was a poor society"[33] and living conditions resembled those of a "Third World."[34] For example, in 1972, statistics showed seventy-six percent of Saskatchewan Indians on-reserve were supported by and receiving social assistance.[35]

These reserve conditions were fairly common across Saskatchewan. Typically, few Indians were employed either on or off the reserve. Those who were employed were usually employed in neighboring non-Indian communities where there was little or no mixing of Indians and Whites. Education was also limited on-reserve. Students preferred schooling on-reserve for the lower grades but were often bussed to non-Indian communities for upper-year schooling.[36] Because students had to leave their home communities to attend upper-year schooling, few in fact attended. Many social problems also continued to plague reserves during this time. For example, drinking, abuse and violence rates consistently increased in the post-war era.[37]

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[31] Helen Buckley, *From Wooden Ploughs to Welfare: Why Indian Policy Failed in the Prairie Provinces* (Canada: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992) 69.
[32] *Ibid,* 69-71.
[33] *Ibid,* 71.
[34] *Ibid,* 77.
[35] *Ibid.*
[36] *Ibid,* 84-85.
[37] *Ibid,* 92.

The evidence would suggest that Indian women saw the short courses as an escape from such post-war conditions. The courses indeed offered an opportunity to leave behind, even in a temporary manner, daily routines that defined their lives. As well, the document indicated that women also wanted to escape from the unhealthy social state of their communities.[38] The "Evaluation of Homemaking Courses on Indian Reserves" also indicated that perhaps some of the women in the communities were attempting to stimulate and initiate change, or at the very least, participate in the process. For example, the document states that women were taking the courses because they were "more interested in the outside world and what [was] happening".[39] Moreover, as a result of Indian women taking the courses, the document reported that: "More women voice their opinions", "More women...are attending band meetings" and "...more are becoming members of band councils."[40] As Jeannette Armstrong has noted, "In traditional[41] Aboriginal society, it was woman [sic] who shaped the thinking of all its members in a loving, nurturing atmosphere within the base family unit."[42] So, it seems more than reasonable to deduce that Indian women would take the initiative to make changes and/or escape problems in

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[38] See above quotations citing reasons why women took the courses.

[39] "Evaluation of Homemaking Courses on Indian Reserves", 1969, 36.

[40] *Ibid.*

[41] There seems to be some debate about what constitutes traditionalism. It is important not to confuse traditional with historical and non-traditional with contemporary. Traditionalism can and does exist today - both in individuals and communities. For a further discussion on concepts of traditionalism as related to self-government, see Patricia Monture-Angus, *Journeying Forward: Dreaming First Nations Independence* (Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, 1998).

[42] Jeannette Armstrong, "Invocation: The Real Power of Aboriginal Women" in Christine Miller and Patricia Chuchryk, eds., *Women of the First Nations: Power, Wisdom and Strength* (Winnipeg: The University of Manitoba Press, 1996) viii. Women's role as nurturers is also a prominent role in White societies as well.

their communities. As Patricia Chuchryk and Christine Miller suggest, even today, "...Aboriginal women are actively participating in improving the quality of life in their/our communities. Many Indigenous cultures embrace women as nurturers, caregivers and leaders, and strive to strengthen women's roles in their communities."[43]

Regardless of the reasons why Indian women contacted Extension, Extension Specialist Anne Colley followed through with the request from the James Smith Reserve and for two months, spent two days each month with twenty Indian women from the reserve. Colley lectured on the requested areas, which included budgeting, purchasing food and clothing, health, allowances and discipline for children as well as care of homes.[44] The course also involved discussions as well as demonstrations.[45] A subsequent reserve requested instruction in that same summer. "From then on," Extension specialists Anne Colley and Diane Hancock wrote in their 1969 report on the program, "...there was no looking back. The efficiency of the 'moccasin telegraph' was soon very evident as requests for similar courses from other reserves began to

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[43] Patricia Chuchryk, and Christine Miller, "Introduction" in Christine Miller and Patricia Chuchryk, eds., *Women of the First Nations: Power, Wisdom and Strength* (Winnipeg: The University of Manitoba Press, 1996) 4. It is interesting to note that Jo-Anne Fiske made similar findings amongst the Carrier women of British Columbia. Fiske reported that Carrier women of British Columbia "...are convinced that strong families rely on a woman's care." She further put forth that Carrier women "...provide leadership in traditional and non-traditional ways: they exert domestic influence, provide clan leadership, compete for administrative and elected office and form voluntary associations." See Jo-Anne Fiske, "Carrier Women and the Politics of Mothering" in Veronica Strong-Boag and Anita Clair Fellman, eds., *Rethinking Canada: The Promise of Women's History*, 3rd edition, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997, page 370.

[44] "Evaluation of Homemaking Courses on Indian Reserves," 1969, 1.

[45] *Ibid.*

arrive."[46] As the evaluation document notes: "Requests for...courses were received from other reserves and by later summer of 1966 a total of 18 five-day courses had been held with 160 Indian women participating".[47]

By the fall of 1966, due to the overwhelming success of the program, Colley and Hancock felt that in order to continue to meet the increasing demands for short courses, communication would have to be established between the Indian women of the reserves, the Indian Affairs Branch and the Division of Extension.[48] In October of that same year, a conference, funded by the regional branch of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, was hosted by the Western Co-Op College in Saskatoon. Attending were thirty Indian women as well as staff members from Indian Affairs and the Extension Division, University of Saskatchewan. The conference proved to be the first to bring the community, Indian Affairs and the university together in a triangular relationship to discuss, on an equal level, education in Indian communities.[49] Colley and Hancock had this to say about the conference:

> Discussions center[ed] on the implications of the changes in the Indian way of life; how to receive and exchange information between Indian homemakers and agency field personnel; educational resources available, especially for young people; and how Indian women on reserves can more easily obtain up-to-date homemaking knowledge. The Indian women have said to us

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[46] *Ibid,* 2. The moccasin telegraph is an affectionate term for communication amongst Indian people. The term is still used today.

[47] "Evaluation of Homemaking Courses on Indian Reserves", 1973, 2.

[48] *Ibid.*

[49] *Ibid.*

> loudly and clearly "*We want to learn more about everything*" [emphasis added].[50]

Due to the overwhelming interest and success of the initial pilot-style courses as well as the 1966 conference, the Extension Division entered into a service contract with the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. The five-year contract became effective 1 April 1967 and ended 31 March 1972, and had a total working budget of $51,000.[51] According to the contract, Extension agreed to "...undertake to provide the supervision necessary for the organization and implementation of programs designed to raise housekeeping standards on Indian reserves and to prepare families for relocation to urban communities."[52]

Structurally, the program looked similar to other small departments on campus. The working budget of $51,000 was primarily used to provide one full-time home economist, travel expenses, stenographic services and supplies for on-campus courses.[53] In addition, three home economists were also hired as needed.[54] The costs incurred by Extension were submitted to the regional office of Indian Affairs and Northern Development in Regina. Monthly remittance was granted upon receipt of expenses.[55]

The content and offerings of instruction were set up to be specific in nature. For example, each subject area, namely sewing, foods, using electricity, knitting and handicraft

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[50] *Ibid.*

[51] *Ibid.*

[52] *Ibid.*

[53] Although there were some on-campus Indian Homemaking courses, this thesis will only focus on the off-campus, on-reserve courses.

[54] "Evaluation of Homemaking Courses on Indian Reserves", 1969, 3.

workshops, was based upon a thirty-hour course load which closely resembled the Extension courses offered to non-Indian communities.[56] Each instructor was responsible for one area of instruction and acted as the co-ordinator for that particular subject. The program worked well for the instructors, too. Not only did it allow them to turn their interests and education into employment, it also provided them with a venue in which they could express and fulfill their own training and education relating to homemaking and domestic skills.

Anne Colley was primarily responsible for the knitting and crocheting courses. Colley was born in 1912.[57] She began attending the University of Saskatchewan in 1948 and was awarded a Bachelor of Home Economics and Bachelor of Education in 1964. Following her convocation, the University hired Colley immediately. She continued her education while working and received a diploma in Continuing Education in 1969 from the College of Graduate Studies, University of Saskatchewan.[58]

The knitting and crocheting courses consisted of three independent courses: "Learn to Knit", "Two-Needle Knitting" and "Four-Needle Knitting." Some of the items that Colley instructed women to make were slippers, sweaters, socks, mitts and baby outfits. In addition to teaching knitting and crocheting techniques, Colley also instructed students on the "...selection

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[55] *Ibid.*

[56] *Ibid.* The "Using Electricity" classes could not be taught unless the reserve had electricity - which many did not.

[57] Anne Colley currently resides in British Columbia, Canada. These interviews were conducted via telephone, by author, 14 July 1998.

[58] *Ibid.*

of suitable yarn, sources of supply of yarns, understanding of the language of knitting patterns, and care of knitted garments made at home or purchased".[59]

Instructor Mary Hull spent most of her twenty or so years at Extension providing instruction on textiles, clothing and draperies.[60] Hull was born in 1919 and attended a one-room school in Manitoba. In 1939, she took an apprenticeship in dressmaking, tailoring and design. In 1941, however, she temporarily left her field of training and joined the Canadian Airforce until 1945 when she returned to the University of Manitoba and entered the Home Economics program. Hull continued her education in Home Economics and in 1958 graduated with a Master's Degree in Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology.[61] She began working with the Centre for Community Studies in 1958 and moved into Extension shortly thereafter. She taught at Extension as well as at the College of Home Economics from 1979-1980. In fact, Hull taught the last tailoring class ever offered by the College in 1979.[62] Hull was married but not a parent.

Hull instructed sewing in the Indian Homemaking Program. The program offered six different levels of sewing courses, "...beginning with the simplest Introductory Course and proceeding progressively to the more advanced Tailoring Course."[63] Each course involved thirty

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[59] "Evaluation of Homemaking Courses on Indian Reserves", 1972, 11.

[60] Mary Hull passed away shortly after I conducted the interviews with her. She was extremely ill during the time when I conducted the interviews and it was difficult for her to speak. However, despite her terminal cancer, she offered me diaries, books, evaluations, and lots of stories. I wish to pay my respects to her here.

[61] Mary Hull, interview by author, 6 May 1998.

[62] *Ibid.* No further information available as to what institution Hull attended to receive her degree.

[63] "Evaluation of Homemaking Courses on Indian Reserves", 1969, 4.

hours of instruction and was based upon the "Bishop Method of Clothing Construction."[64] Students who attended at least two courses, or sixty hours of instruction, were sent a refurbished treadle sewing machine which was donated by the "Saskatchewan Association of Homemaker Clubs" and refurbished by Anne Colley's husband.[65] Each student was provided with fabric, needles, thread and other accessories needed to make a practice garment.[66] As with the knitting courses, the sewing courses also involved instruction on "...use and care of the sewing machines; use of commercial patterns; basic construction techniques; purchasing suitable fabric; comparison costs between ready-made and homemade; and finishing techniques to produce a quality garment."[67] It is interesting to note, with respect to Hull and Colley, that the two entered the work-force later in life and turned their homemaking interests into employment.[68] This suggests that access to higher education was not easily accessible to women during this period and this speaks to both gender and class inequities in accessing higher education. It seems that, given the information known about Hull and Colley and how their formal education developed, it can be assumed that they both came from modest, lower middle-class backgrounds.

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[64] A popular method during the 1950s and 1960s.

[65] A further discussion on this will appear in Chapter 3.

[66] Needles, thread, patterns, thimbles and so forth.

[67] "Evaluation of Homemaking Courses on Indian Reserves", 1969, 4.

[68] It was unclear as to why Colley and Hull entered the work force late in life. It might suggest that the two women were, in fact, lower middle class, and not able to access formal levels of education until they were older and were more financially stable.

Diane Hancock was responsible for the administration of the program, but also instructed some of the foods courses.[69] Hancock was awarded a Bachelor of Science in Home Economics degree from the University of Saskatchewan in 1966. She worked in Extension from September 1967-June 1974.[70] Unlike Colley and Hull, Hancock was single and younger while she was involved with Extension. The fact that Hancock was able to access formal education in younger years might suggest that she was in the upper echelons of the middle class, unlike Hull and Colley who, by virtue of the fact they accessed formal education later in life, probably occupied a space within the lower middle class.[71] Nevertheless, Hancock's administration duties for the program involved "...receiving requests for programs and sending out information they [Indian bands] needed."[72] She was also responsible for sending out letters, newsletters and lines of credit needed when Indian women themselves took over the role of instructor.[73] In addition, Hancock was in charge of expense accounts, salaries, wages and accommodations for instructors.[74]

As noted, Hancock was also largely responsible for instructing the foods courses. There were two basic food courses, both of which were divided into two five-day courses.[75] The first course, "Managing Your Family Food," was a basic "...study of a week's food [needed] for the family" and also involved "...planning for nutrition; spending the food dollar; preparation of

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[69] Diane's maiden name was Hancock - her married name is Berg.

[70] Diane (Hancock) Berg, interview by author, 10 September 1998.

[71] This also raises an interesting point that middle class, as we know it, is not conceived of one, homogenous group of people. Clearly, there is a hierarchy or social structure within this category.

[72] *Ibid.*

[73] *Ibid.* This will be further discussed in Chapter 4.

[74] *Ibid.*

economical nutritious dishes; packing good lunches for school children and working men; using left-overs; and safe storage of food supplies."[76] The second course entitled "Preserving Your Family Food," focussed on the "...basic principles of food preservation by canning and freezing, and a discussion of traditional methods of smoking and drying foods."[77] The "Evaluation of Homemaking Courses on Indian Reserves," written by Hancock, noted that the students very much enjoyed the food courses even though it might have had very limited application to their experiences.

The foods courses, along with the knitting/crocheting and sewing courses, seemed to be the three most popular courses offered by Extension in the Indian Homemaking Program.[78] Hancock, Hull and Colley reported frequently that these courses were the most requested and had the highest attendance.[79] Likely, this was due to the interesting content as well as the level of skill developed in the courses. Women were more likely to take a subsequent course of the same skill if they took an interest and demonstrated skill at the introductory level. As well, the foods, knitting/crocheting and sewing courses also provided lots of opportunities for

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[75] "Evaluation of Homemaking Courses on Indian Reserves", 1969, 4.

[76] *Ibid.* The idea of packing good lunches for working men is interesting as during this time, not many Indian men worked off of the reserve.

[77] *Ibid.*

[78] The Indian Homemaking Program also offered courses on using electricity; which taught "...principles of safety with electricity and a study of small appliances and home equipment." "The Evaluation of Homemaking Courses on Indian Reserves," 1969, also noted that, "Since many Indian people are faced with buying these items for the first time, selection features and cost ranges are discussed. Each appliance is demonstrated by actual use in order to help participants overcome the fear of using electric appliances and equipment" ("Evaluation of Homemaking Courses on Indian Reserves," 1969, 5). In addition to using electricity, handicraft workshops were also given which focussed on what Extension considered the revival of authentic Indian art which they hoped would translate into income for the artists (Evaluation of Homemaking Courses on Indian Reserves," 1969, 5).

socialization between students and amongst the instructors. Thus, skills could be acquired and practised in a social environment. This positive social aspect of the courses affected both parties involved. This environment was not only fun for students but also for instructors.

The program, then, served many purposes. For Extension, the Indian Homemaking Program fulfilled their belief in helping disadvantaged communities, and assimilating them into the dominant White society. For Indian women, the program offered entertainment and possibly an escape from and/or solution to the social conditions on Saskatchewan reserves as well as an opportunity to improve upon and/or learn practical homemaking skills. And, for Extension instructors, the program offered an opportunity for them to exercise the education and knowledge they had acquired in the field of homemaking and to turn this education and knowledge into employment. Because there were different reasons for Indian women, the Division of Extension and Extension specialists for being involved in the Indian Homemaking Program from 1967-1972, it is likely that the program affected the respective parties just as differently. It is the goal of this thesis to discuss the effects the program had on, in particular, the White instructors, regardless of the varied reasons as to why the program was conceived.

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[79] *Ibid.*

CHAPTER TWO

Tales of Travels: 'Road Stories' of Program Instructors

At first glance, it would seem that the most important aspect of the Indian Homemaking Program was the program itself, namely, the courses taught, the relations between the instructors and the students, and the information and knowledge both communities gained by working with one another. However, after conducting interviews with Extension instructors, it is obvious that the program allowed them to enjoy experiences that they would not have had if they had not been employed by Extension as instructors in the Indian Homemaking Program. The point, here, is that their employment with Extension allowed the instructors to form a private space or community that enabled them not only to have many adventures of travel throughout Saskatchewan, but that also provided them with an opportunity in which they could discuss their observations regarding the Indian Homemaking Program.[1] Travelling was a part of their occupation and stories about their employment generated from their travels.

One of the delights the instructors experienced as instructors were their many travels. In the oral interviews, the instructors disclosed fond memories of their travels to and from the workshops and courses. These travels, in typical Saskatchewan style, often included enduring

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[1] Writing about the adventures of the women on the road as well as the stories they shared during their travels relates well to the overall theme of the thesis, which is to focus on the effects the program had on the White instructors.

factors such as harsh weather and less than perfect road conditions. Their travels, however, were also memorable because of the uniqueness they possessed: it was rare, to say the least, for women to be travelling alone on the prairies during the 1960s. The instructors of the program were fortunate enough to experience things that many women simply did not have an opportunity to experience. These women saw a great deal of the province, drove through many kinds of inclement weather, met all sorts of people and, most importantly, shared thoughts and ideas pertinent to their work at Extension. It was their work at Extension that brought them together and allowed them to form a unique community. What is interesting about Colley, Hull and Hancock is that in the interviews conducted for this thesis, they spoke more of how their experiences bound them together than of the friendships and relationships they created with their Indian counterparts. Although there was a sense of community between Indians and non-Indians as a result of the program, the bonding and common experiences between the instructors seemed to have more of a long-lasting impact than cross-cultural experiences. All of the instructors agreed that the time spent travelling was wonderful for it was conducive to an environment that promoted learning and understanding in, about and beyond the program.[2] They further agreed that the hours and time they spent together in confined quarters, whether being in car, plane or hotel room, allowed them to communicate feelings and experiences about their work.

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[2] Hancock believes that as instructors, they would not have shared and communicated what they did if they had not been together so much.

Before an examination of tales of travel can begin, it is worthwhile to note that the instructors were, in fact, part of an ever-increasing trend of women entering the work force. For example, between 1967-1972, the rates of Canadian women entering the work force grew from 36.5% in 1967 to 40.0% in 1972.[3] The majority of women were in occupations involving clerical work, teaching and nursing and worked largely in and around their communities. That the instructors' occupations involved extensive travel and time away from home was exceptional when compared to typical working women of this era. This suggests that although the fact that the Extension specialists were working outside of the home may not be unique, the type of employment and the demands of that employment, was unusual.

Travelling throughout the province was close to the hearts of the instructors, in part, because they travelled so often. Colley noted, "we spent a lot of time travelling -- sometimes alone and sometimes in pairs or groups."[4] Hull found the travels were exciting: "You can imagine that in those days, it was quite something to have a pair of women dashing around all over the province at sometimes all hours of the night!"[5] Hull cherished her travelling memories and especially sharing such stories with other friends and family: "I think people, women in particular, were often impressed with us -- maybe our bravery? Maybe they were envious? I don't know -- but women loved hearing our stories of travelling."[6] Perhaps what the Extension

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[3] Statistic Canada, Canadian Economic Observer, Historical Statistical Supplement, Vol. 1-6, 1986-1991/1992.
[4] Anne Colley, interview by author, 14 July 1998.
[5] Mary Hull, interview by author, 13 May 1998.
[6] Dianne (Hancock) Berg, interview by author, 10 September 1998.

instructors shared in their stories and tales of travel represented hard work for some and excitement for others. Nevertheless, their road stories were a definite part of their occupation and Hancock echoed Hull's enthusiastic take on the travels: "We were adventurous, brave, and had many adventures."[7] For example, one story that Hull shared was this:

> On the 31st of March we [Anne and I] got stranded once coming from PA [Prince Albert] - the snow was so bad that they stopped everyone on the highway. We got the last room in PA that night. They did not have any rooms with single beds so we had to get a room with one double bed - and Anne was quite a big lady (so you can imagine how that worked!). We had no night clothes because we had just come up for the day. People were sleeping in the lobby and the people in the hotel were trying to find them a place to sleep - it was that bad. The snow was so bad in the morning that Anne couldn't get across the street to get a toothbrush at the drugstore. The best part was our husbands told us, "Don't come out! Don't venture out!" We sure got a kick out of that....We left the next day at 2 o'clock - they had cleared one lane on the highway and were directing traffic through it. All part of a day's work, I guess![8]

Hancock also reminisced fondly of her days on the road. It seems that nothing, neither poor roads nor poor weather conditions, kept the instructors from getting to their required destination. Hancock laughed when asked if conditions ever kept them from getting them where they needed to go: "Oh, we were out in all kinds of weather and all kinds of conditions."[9] One of Hancock's favourite stories included a stay at Onion Lake:

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[7] Dianne (Hancock) Berg, interview by author, 19 October 1998.

[8] Hull, 13 May 1998.

[9] (Hancock) Berg, 10 September 1998.

> February of 1970 is one trip I remember. It was in Onion Lake - we [Anne and I] were bringing either 7 or 9 sewing machines to the community. We left Saskatoon in the early morning and planned on arriving in Onion Lake the next day. We stayed at the Paradise Hill Hotel - which was $3.50 a night. The beds were like hammocks (they had NO support AT ALL!). We had made arrangements to put the truck in the garage across the street because we had lots of cargo - tonnes of blankets and clothes. We had supper in the little café and I had the best hot-beef-roast sandwich I ever had - it was $2.95. Home-made gravy, home-made French fries and the roast beef would absolutely just melt in your mouth. We decided after dinner that we should go to bed. It was freezing and we tried to stay warm - we played cards but then decided we should go to bed. We got into the "hammocks" and put our jackets over top of us and went to sleep. The next day the truck started fine. We made it to Onion Lake and had a marvellous presentation.[10]

However, probably the most memorable travelling tale told by Hancock was her story of her and Colley's adventure to Buffalo Narrows -- an important story because they seemed to beat the odds of weather and time:

> We [Anne and I] went to Buffalo Narrows one time - it was 5pm when we left Saskatoon and by the time we got to Green Lake it had really snowed. The road was a terrible dirt road (as most of these roads to the reserves were) and it wasn't a flat road - it was all over the place. We just drove aiming for being in the middle of the trees because then chances were you were on the road - we couldn't see from where they had ploughed earlier. There were great big snowflakes and there were tonnes of vehicles in the ditch. And lots of deer. It was most risky. But what could we do? Well, we decided we couldn't really turn around and go back because there was really no where to go to. And, we hadn't seen another vehicle for quite a while so we kept going and we were the last ones to cross the ferry that night. When we pulled in to Buffalo

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[10] *Ibid.*

> Narrows we contacted the person who was expecting us and they were totally flabbergasted that we actually made it - so was Extension. I guess they didn't think we could do it![11]

Travelling adventures were not always limited to road travel, though. Often, especially in the cases of northern reserves, chartered flights were taken as the primary means of transportation. Some of these flights also rekindled fond memories for the instructors. Hancock shared a story of a flight to Pelican Point:

> One time I flew from PA [Prince Albert] to Pelican Point (which is north of Cumberland House). The landing conditions were not so good so when we landed we had to get out quickly because the pilot didn't want to be down on the ice too long! He was up in an amazingly short time (I hardly had my feet out)![12]

Flying was unpredictable, at best. Another time while flying Hancock recalled that, "...we almost ran out of fuel...that was a little scary."[13] However, the less than perfect conditions of flight never once prohibited an instructor from fulfilling her requirements and instructing on a reserve -- regardless of where it was located and how she was to get there.

Although the stories in themselves resemble adventure and in some cases, borderline danger, the importance for the instructors lay not in the travels but what the travels represented. The travels represented stories of adventure, dedication and pride in getting the job done. However, one of the most beneficial aspects of commuting to and from the reserves around the province, for the instructors, was the time spent discussing their experiences in the program. For

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[11] *Ibid.*
[12] *Ibid.*

example, they talked about what courses worked and which courses did not. They talked about where they felt most welcomed and where they felt least welcomed. They talked about how successful the courses were and just how badly off some of the reserves seemed to be. Hancock saw the travelling as an opportune time to analyse their experiences as instructors and attempt to figure out what was happening in Indian Country. They also regularly reflected on the impact their work had on their own lives. Hancock believed that the Extension instructors would not have been so apt to share their thoughts, fears and experiences if they were not restricted by space and provided with the luxury of time:

> While we travelled, we continuously bounced ideas back and forth trying to figure things out - cultural stuff - why Indian women did this and why they didn't do this and how these things impacted our own lives. It was a real lesson in cross-cultural politics. We would have a meeting and this lady would bring up a problem and we told her we would work on it - and we did. It made me a better communicator and problem solver, too. We would throw around crazy ideas and what have you and after a while, something starts to make sense. "Let's try it this way." It wasn't frivolous - the driving in between because lots of times we were still working and trying to figure stuff out. ...[14]

It was the time away from the office and the instructing that the women remembered the most -- possibly because the above quotation also suggests that the women capitalised on the opportunity to develop meaningful relationships related to their occupation and employment. It was this taste of autonomy and freedom that holds the fondest memories for the Extension

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[13] *Ibid.*

[14] *Ibid*

instructors. As Hancock noted, "It's often still the times driving and travelling that I cherish most".[15]

The frequent mobility of the instructors also allowed them to involve others in their work. For example, travel often meant visiting family members and friends along the way to a workshop or course. These visits sometimes had a surprising yet positive result with respect to cross-cultural relations. A visit on the way to a workshop occasionally turned into an adventure. For example, Hancock remembers

> ...going to one of the reserves around Punnichy for a sewing machine presentation and my parents have a farm along the way. So, we [Anne and I] decided that since this was an afternoon thing, we would stop and have lunch with Mom and Dad and then carry on because it was only about another hour to the reserve. And Mom was asking us about this and that and I said to her, "Why don't you just come with us?" She did not want to go - a typical bigoted response. But, Dad also said, "Why don't you go?" so she sort of got forced into it and came along. It was one of those presentations where there were quite a few there and more and more came and they were wearing what they had made in their classes and it didn't take very long - you see, Anne had a good knack at breaking the ice - and we were laughing and exchanging stories and talked about kids and various other things and the lunch came out and it was a marvellous lunch. By this time, Mom felt quite relaxed. Well, my Mother went home at supper time with quite a different outlook than what she had had before. She found out there wasn't anything really to worry about on the reserve we went to and she had quite a good time. That drive was particularly worth it![16]

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[15] *Ibid.*

[16] *Ibid.*

What is interesting about this particular story is that it allows for us, as Sherene Razack notes, to question "What do the eyes of the dominant group see when they encounter subordinate groups?"[17] The anecdote suggests that commonalties of experiences, such as child-rearing, seem to transcend class and cultural boundaries. As Hancock noted, 'Women are women: they care for their children, they care for their homes and *I believe* [emphasis added] that these things are common bonds that transcend skin colour."[18] It is worthwhile to note that none of the instructors were mothers. Perhaps this suggests that the instructors were consciously seeking commonalties by focussing on woman-centred experiences as it is difficult to imagine that the actual experiences of child-rearing were the same between the two groups of women given the cultural and class differences.[19] It seemed that the White instructors and their families emphasized the bonds and commonality between themselves and Indian women and ignored the differences.[20]

Stories that emphasise commonalities and universalities of women's experiences become even more complex. Is it responsible to take such stories at face value and accept the very real possibility that there were instances where women did connect, regardless of difference? Or, is there more to the story than there appears? Perhaps, it is more responsible to analyze comments surrounding ideas of commonality. In the case of Hancock's mother, is it possible that very little

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[17] Sherene Razack, *Looking White People in the Eye: Gender, Race and Culture in Courtrooms and Classrooms* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998) 16.

[18] (Hancock) Berg, 19 October 1998.

[19] The fact that the instructors were not parents also explains why they could engage in work that required their absence from home.

[20] It would be interesting to explore whether or not the fact that the White instructors and their families consciously or unconsciously ignored differences and the implications of this as a part of cross-cultural relations.

familiarity existed and that she was creating and focussing on small aspects of commonality to ease her own fears, hesitations and uncomfortableness? Or, were the Indian women in the anecdote sensitive to her insecurities and simply sharing stories that they knew would make her more at ease? Further, are these sorts of communicative actions and reactions conscious or are they simply part of the process of socialisation? Clearly, it is difficult (and probably irresponsible) to pigeon-hole the story about Hancock's mother into one of these plausible explanations. If the story does demonstrate anything at all, it is that it speaks to the complexities involved in history, the idiosyncrasies of women's spaces and the intricacies of oral history -- all of which are applicable to the experiences of Hull, Colley, Hancock and Hancock's mother as privileged women looking at, and in, Indian culture.

Overall, the instructors greatly appreciated the adventures they endured while travelling. They were extremely aware of the opportunities on which they capitalised. Opportunities, they were aware, many women of their class, age and culture were not able to experience. For example, Hancock noted that "We got to see many things: Saskatchewan landscape, for example -- many things that other women did not get to see -- especially on their own."[21] Clearly, it was important for Hancock to have experienced such adventures with colleagues and without husbands and/or family. The instructors saw their experiences on the road as bonuses rather than

[21] (Hancock) Berg, 19 October 1998. Hancock also noted how privileged they were when sharing their stories with other Saskatchewan women.

onerous tasks or means that needed to be tolerated for a successful end: "I think we were privileged women to have experienced what we did."[22]

Collectively, the experiences of the instructors on the road suggest a time and place of enjoyment. Although it seems to be somewhat unfashionable in contemporary historical studies to stress the commonalties among women, it seems that the experiences of Colley, Hull and Hancock speak clearly to a connection and commonality of experiences. But, this similarity of experiences and creation of an elite space relates with one another rather than with their Indian counterparts. Their work as Extension instructors, coupled with their common backgrounds of class, education, region and culture, allowed indeed for a common experience. As a result, they all had similar tales, memories and experiences of the program.[23]

This elite space and culture, although confined seemingly to only three individuals, should not necessarily imply that analysis is not warranted. Veronica Strong-Boag, and Anita Clair Fellman suggest the idea of womens' culture, that is, a space by, for and about women.[24] They write:

> More subtle, but no less effective, has been the elaboration of what has been termed women's culture. Rooted in friendships and family ties, this culture included a broad range of rituals and traditions - everything from help in childbirth, advice on dealing with husbands, exchanging recipes and folk remedies, and holding

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[22] (Hancock) Berg, 10 September 1998.

[23] All of the stories from the three women, although different in detail, resembled one another in spirit.

[24] Veronica Strong-Boag, and Anita Clair Fellman, "Introduction" in Veronica Strong-Boag, and Anita Clair Fellman, eds., *Rethinking Canada: The Promise of Women's History,* 3rd Edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997) 2.

> and attending bridal and baby showers, to sharing strategies for confounding troublesome bosses and organizing needed community services.[25]

Catherine Hall echoes Strong-Boag and Fellman's use of the ideology of women's culture. She notes that historians need to look to see "In what conditions have women produced and reproduced their lives...through labour...[and] how has the free expression of this activity been distorted and blocked by the circumstances of society?"[26] She further contends that although we know that women "...occupied a separate sphere from men," we also need to look more carefully at this culture to see why women "...began to spend more time together and to recognise mutual interests."[27] She also suggests that "Women gradually began to combine, both in the family and outside it through friendship, to protect [their] mutual interests."[28] Hall argues that feminist historians, regardless of who or what they are studying, "set about discovering what women had done in the workplace, in the home, as mothers, daughters, wives and lovers."[29]

Strong-Boag's, Fellman's and Hall's ideas suggest that the experiences of Colley, Hancock and Hull were a part of the larger context of womens' culture.[30] Womens' culture does not necessarily mean involving limitless numbers of women and is not limited to broader political movements or like-minded ideas regarding economics. And, the idea of a distinct

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[25] *Ibid.*

[26] Catherine Hall, *White, Male and Middle Class: Explorations in Feminism and History* (New York: Routledge, 1992) 6.

[27] *Ibid.*

[28] *Ibid.*

[29] *Ibid,* 8.

[30] Much to the dismay of Granatstein, to be sure.

womens' culture is also not limited to, or solely the result of, oppression.[31] Rather, it includes what Hall calls a myriad of experiences as well as the "specificity of women's culture."[32] The concept of women's culture can easily refer to the daily chatting and bonding of women.[33]

The women's culture that was created by the Extension instructors was clearly created by, for and about Extension Specialists. They saw their travels and adventures as beneficial to themselves and the program and believed that "This part of the program was a whole learning experience."[34] In retrospect and hindsight, they also saw that "...the travelling part of program was precedent setting...and progressive."[35] They wanted women, as they had, to experience Saskatchewan in the somewhat free and liberated spirit that they did. They truly welcomed and embraced the fact that they saw themselves as unique and even privileged women of their time, and wanted other women to follow in their footsteps.

However, this uniqueness and privilege is also complicated and should not go unnoticed. Their unique relationship can be seen in relation to both White and Indian women. The Extension instructors were atypical in White, lower, middle-class urban Saskatchewan in that

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[31] David De Brou and Aileen Moffatt, "Introduction" in David De Brou, and Aillen Moffatt, eds., *"Other" Voices: Historical Essays on Saskatchewan Women* (Regina: Canadian Plains Research Centre, 1995) 1.

[32] Hall, 14.

[33] At the University of Saskatchewan "Changing the Climate Conference," 2000, I had the privilege of listening to a presenter who had a unique insight into the comparison of what she deemed men's culture and women's culture. Beverly Dent, who spoke openly about her transgenderedness, discussed and compared her experiences as a man and then as a woman, She found that in women's culture, what she seemed to articulate as women socialising with women, there were more tendencies to help one another, more and better communication regarding work, husbands, children, feelings, thoughts and daily experiences, She saw these constant streams of chatting and sharing of ideas, fears, troubles, likes, dislikes and so forth, as promoting the bonding of women with one another,

[34] (Hancock) Berg, 10 September 1998.

[35] *Ibid.*

they were educated and working outside of the home in an occupation that involved travel and promoted independence. Within this context, they were able to create a community which allowed them to safely reflect upon their experiences, analyze their challenges and celebrate their similarities and differences. The instructors were also unique when compared to their Indian counterparts in that they were clearly better educated and economically advantaged.

The irony here is that they were using their position of privilege and wage earners to teach domestic skills to already economically disadvantaged Indian women. These skills would only serve to promote a more middle-class style of domestic, unpaid labour since these were not skills that would allow Indian women to enter the paid labour force. The instructors capitalised on their own education and women working outside of the home to teach skills to Indian women. Even though they believed Eurocentric domestic skills were important for success, the instructors had to leave their homes to teach it.

However, the position of privilege that the instructors held beyond the university did not occur in the same fashion within the university itself. Behind the walls of the male-dominated structure, instructors at the Division of Extension appeared to have had little clout for two separate, yet interrelated reasons. First, the Division of Extension simply did not have the same prestige and exposure as did other departments and colleges within the University of Saskatchewan -- despite the early dedication of its founders. More often than not, the Division

of Extension was relegated to the periphery of university happenings.[36] Second, although the instructors were in charge of some of the programming within the College, Extension itself was run and delegated by men.[37] This speaks to what scholar Razack has observed about positions of power and privilege. She notes that "...it is vitally important to explore in a historical and site-specific way the meaning of race, economic status, class, disability, sexuality, and gender as they come together to structure women in different and shifting positions of power and privilege".[38] She further notes that "we are all simultaneously dominant and subordinate, and have varying degrees of privilege and penalty."[39]

Their role as instructors, though, also directly supported and justified the purpose of Extension -- to educate the public. It was this mandate, combined with the requests from Indians on reserves, that provided the instructors with the opportunity to experience travel throughout Saskatchewan and, it was during these travels that the instructors formed a very private community -- one which articulated and evaluated their experiences as instructors in the program.

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[36] (Hancock) Berg, 10 September 1998.

[37] *Ibid.*

[38] Razack, *Looking White People in the Eye,* 12.

[39] *Ibid,* 161. Echoes Memmi's thoughts on the position of the small colonizer.

CHAPTER THREE

Powerful Lessons: Effects of the Program on its Instructors

Although the focus of the program was on instructing Indian women on how to do things the White way, it soon became obvious to the instructors that there was much to be gained by connecting with Indian culture. In fact, the non-Indian instructors and specialists of the Indian Homemaking Program soon discovered a great deal about Indian culture. The contact instructors had with Indian women in Indian communities allowed them to understand and appreciate the strengths of Indian culture. Often, some of their previously acquired stereotypes were destroyed and they frequently learned things they were not aware of prior to being involved in the program. The knowledge they gained about First Nations cultures was a bonus to the program that none of the instructors could have ever foreseen. This acquisition of cultural knowledge within the concept of the contact zone was crucial to the program and included anything from understanding parts of Indian history such as residential schools to appreciating the value of Elders and women within the community. This gaining of cross-cultural knowledge was paramount and still remains as one of the most valuable parts of the program for the instructors.

Although the program held great promise for the instructors, acceptance and enthusiasm about teaching on Indian reserves were definitely not qualities held by the instructors at the onset of the program. In fact, in the very early stages of the program, the instructors were not told that the classes they were to be teaching were going to be on Indian reserves. Mary Hull believed the

choice to have classes in Indian communities was a conscious decision made by the University of Saskatchewan: "It wasn't until I arrived that I discovered the class was on an Indian Reserve."[1] Hull further suggested that perhaps the University was sceptical: she wondered if the Division of Extension thought she would not agree to instruct the class if she had prior knowledge that it was to be held on a reserve.[2] Diane Hancock's experience differed only slightly. Although she and her colleague, Anne Colley, were aware of the fact of their on-reserve class location, she admitted that, "We started out with some trepidation."[3] Seemingly, there were mixed feelings from both the University administrators and from the instructors, about the potential difficulties and possibilities of teaching in Indian country.

Chances are that some of these trepidations were built upon preconceived notions and stereotypes of Indian people and Indian women. According to historian Sarah Carter, people in the settlement era had two very distinct, polarised images of Indian women which were still evident in post-war Canada. Carter notes:

> The images were neither new nor unique to the Canadian West....The beautiful "Indian Princess" who saved or aided white men while remaining aloof and virtuous in a woodland paradise was the positive side of her image. Her opposite, the squalid and immoral "Squaw",[4] lived in a shack at the edge of town, and her

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[1] Mary Hull, interview by author, 6 May 1998.

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] Diane (Hancock) Berg, interview by author, 10 September 1998.

[4] This is what some Cree people consider to be a bastardised term of the Cree word *eskewew* which means 'woman'.

> physical removal or destruction can be understood as necessary to the progress of civilization.[5]

She further states that White settlers were influenced by "...government pronouncements [that] they were idle and gossipy [and] preferring tents to proper houses"[6] and that the government portrayed Indian women as "...resisting, resenting and preventing any progress toward modernisation."[7] Although Carter's analysis discusses the settlement era she also suggests, quoting Pamela M. White, that "The high infant mortality rate and the tuberculosis epidemic were all attributed to the supposedly 'slovenly' housekeeping habits, and poor mothering and nursing skills, of Aboriginal women."[8] Unfortunately, this "...either/or binary left newcomers little room to consider the diversity of Aboriginal peoples of the West or the complex identities and roles of Aboriginal women."[9]

The goals of the program would suggest that these preconceived stereotypes of laziness and carelessness were in fact in play and the instructors saw the need to assist and educate Indian people. In some ways, the instructors acted as what Joanne Meyerowitz would classify, as "mythical cultural icons - June Cleaver, Donna Reed, Harriet Nelson - the quintessential white

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[5] Sarah Carter, "Categories and Terrains of Exclusion: Constructing the 'Indian Woman' in the Early Settlement Era in Western Canada" in Parr, Joy and Rosenfeld, Mark, eds., *Gender and History in Canada.* (Toronto: Copp Clark Ltd., 1996) 31. Although Carter's study focuses on a much earlier area, it seems that some of these stereotypes still exist in society and this was acknowledged by the instructors during the interviews.

[6] *Ibid.*

[7] *Ibid.*

[8] Sarah Carter, "First Nations Women of Prairie Canada in the Early Reserve Years, the 1870s to the 1920s: A Preliminary Inquiry" in Christine Miller and Patricia Chuchryk, , eds., *Women of the First Nations: Power, Wisdom and Strength* (Winnipeg: The University of Manitoba Press, 1996) 54.

[9] Carter, "Categories and Terrains", 31.

middle-class housewives, who stayed at home to rear children, clean house and bake cookies."[10] Ironically, the instructors were promoting an image with which they did not comply and teaching it to women who were not familiar with it.[11]

It is fairly safe to venture that Hull, Hancock and Colley were affected by the stereotypes of Indian women or else they would not have had the trepidation of which Hancock spoke. However, this feeling of hesitation was soon to change. Hull, Hancock and Colley soon came to genuinely enjoy their time spent instructing on the various Saskatchewan Indian reserves. For all of the instructors, the most powerful lesson they took with them from their experiences was that, "Our stereotypes were blown out of the water" and they attributed this to the, "close contact we had with them [Indian women]."[12] The destruction of stereotypes was not the only lesson that was learned. A general understanding of Indian culture was gained as more and more time was spent with Indian women. Unfortunately, however, most of their realizations and awakenings were not incorporated into the program. The instructors were able to deliver the program based upon the similarities of experiences as women. That is, gender was the contact zone between instructors and participants.

One of ways the White instructors were able to connect with Indian women revolved around language. For example, it came as a surprise to Hull that some women on the reserves

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[10] Joanne Meyerowitz, "Introduction" in Joanne Meyerowitz, ed,. *Not June Cleaver: Women and Gender in Postwar America, 1945-1960* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994) 1.

[11] Most reserves during the 1950s and 1960s did not have electricity and hence, no television so they could not enjoy the weekly tales and images of the Cleavers, the Reeds and the Nelsons.

typically spoke their First Nations language exclusively.[13] She reported that, "I discovered only then that some of the women didn't even speak English."[14] Hancock also became aware of the fact that a great number of Indian women did not speak English and quickly adapted to the (largely) Cree pronunciation of things.[15] Hancock eventually even "...learned some Cree like *moonias* [White man]."[16] In addition, the instructors also soon learned to identify what they saw as needs of Indian people with respect to the English language. Hull, for example, taught some of the women to read in the evenings:

> ...many of them had readers from their kids or something like that and in the evening I would sit with them and they would read "Dick and Jane"...one woman I helped...the sweat would just pour down her face because she was concentrating so hard. But "Dick and Jane!" This old gal was about 60 years old reading a kid's book about kids in the city - she couldn't relate to this stuff at all. So I threw those old readers out and brought my own stuff - magazines, newspapers and local stuff for them to read.[17]

Hull recognized that Dick and Jane readers were inappropriate reading materials for Indian women living on a reserve and tried to provide more 'adult' material -- even though it was not necessarily culturally appropriate. It would seem that Hull was more in tune with the needs of Indians women on reserves, for at least some of the time, than the more formal educators of the era.

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[12] Diane (Hancock) Berg, interview by author, 19 October 1998.
[13] Usually Cree or Dene.
[14] Hull, 6 May 1998.
[15] (Hancock) Berg, 19 October 1998.
[16] *Ibid.*
[17] Hull, 13 May 1998.

Language was not the only factor that allowed instructors to have an intimate look at Indian culture. During the instruction of the knitting courses Hull discovered some qualities about Indian women that were unknown to her prior to the program. For example, Hull discovered that, in fact, many of the Indian women "were very clever at knitting."[18] She remembers that they used a Norwegian pattern which required using two or more colours in the form of a very heavy yarn.[19] This suggested to Hull that the women were experienced knitters for first time knitters could simply not master the skill well enough to utilise such an advanced technique. Similarly, Colley also noted that the women on the reserve were expert knitters, but her acquisition of knowledge was manifested differently. Colley reported that the women

> ...would say that they never learned to knit but I discovered that when I gave them needles many of them knew how to hold them and they knitted at twice the speed she intended. For example, they were to originally only knit one-half of a sweater the first week but knitted the entire sweater before the first week was over! I later uncovered that they learned in residential schools but the women tried to remove anything they learned from that experience out of their minds.[20]

Hull was also impressed with the spatial abilities held by Indian women. She noted that part of her instruction included giving students a piece of paper and telling them to design a pattern. "Typically," Hull remembered, "women would work from the centre and then work to the outsides but Indian women worked from left to right and the centre was always determined

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[18] Hull, 6 May 1998.

[19] *Ibid.*

[20] Anne Colley, interview by author, 28 July 1998.

perfectly."[21] Hull was extremely impressed by this skill because, even as an expert seamstress, this was a next-to-impossible task to accomplish. Determining the centre at the end of the project suggested, to Hull, an almost instinctive and well-practised talent -- one that she had not seen as well developed anywhere else.[22] The instruction of sewing classes also provided Hull, Hancock and Colley opportunities to appreciate the homemaking skills of Indian women. Hull remembered that, "The Indian women were remarkable -- after they finished sewing a dress, they pressed it and it fit absolutely perfectly."[23]

The talents of the Indian women in the sewing and knitting portions of the courses also forced the instructors to re-examine their preconceived stereotypes. For example, Hull soon began to question if they had previous experience with sewing and discovered that "...some of them sewed before -- making Pow Wow outfits and what not - but they seemed to enjoy making normal things."[24] Hull understood normalcy to mean Euro-Canadian clothes and garments -- the kind most likely that she and her colleagues sported. Again, her response is intriguing.[25] It is worthwhile to ponder whether Hull's comments are accurate, and if so, why? Maybe there was truth to the fact that Indian women preferred sewing non-Indian garments or everyday clothes. One possibility is that sewing Euro-Canadian garments was a novelty or they represented symbols of modernity. Another possibility is that Hull saw an excitement in the sewing of non-

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[21] Hull, 6 May 1998.
[22] *Ibid.*
[23] Hull, 13 May 1998.
[24] *Ibid.*

Instead, Indian women needed help perfecting old skills. It also forced some instructors to hypothesise as to why they were in the communities if the Indian women already possessed the skills the instructors were asked to present.[31]

The sewing classes also allowed Hull an intimate look at some of the realities on Saskatchewan Indian reserves. She remembered distinctly how Indian women cared for and stored their garments. She reported, for example, that

> At Pinehouse Lake, they [the Indian women] stored their clothes in little packages in the woods. The first morning I saw them leafing through stuff, I thought they were going through the garbage and then I realised it was the stuff they were sewing from the day before....They put the clothes in the woods and rolled them up because, I figured out, there wasn't any room in their houses -- those houses were so damned small. And they did this on their own -- no one told them to do this. So, you would see the girls in the morning, running into the bush and then coming out with a beautifully pressed green dress.[32]

Hull also reminisced about one reserve where, "They [Indian women] kept their bundles separate from others' by garbage cans."[33] Hancock remembers that, "It was difficult to take measurements because the women would wear many dresses...if one got dirty they would put one over top and then another one over top and another one over top."[34] Hancock, though fascinated, could not relate to the layering of unclean clothes and had no ideas as to the purpose of it -- she indicated that she thought it would be simpler and more efficient to simply wash the garment rather than

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[31] Hull, 13 May 1998.
[32] *Ibid.*
[33] *Ibid.*

put a clean dress over a dirty dress.[35] At the same time, Hull noticed that Indian women could get their whites "sparkling clean -- a very clean wash. They had gorgeous, clean washes indeed."[36] At one level, evidence of "clean wash" contradicts Hull's previously held stereotypes of Indian womens' cleanliness. At another level, her comments reflect Euro-Canadian womens' perceptions with cleanliness as a sign of purity and social superiority.

Another way in which the program had an impact on the women at Extension was demonstrated by way of the enthusiasm for the Sewing Machine Project. As stated previously, Hull was in charge of instructing the sewing portions of the short courses.[37] Part of the instruction included learning how to sew on sewing machines that were provided, for the use of the courses only, by the University of Saskatchewan.[38] However, it soon became to clear to all Extension Specialists that it was pointless to instruct sewing if, after the class, Indian women had no equipment on which to practise and utilise their skills. Hancock remembers Colley asking, "So, you teach a woman to sew but she has no sewing machine - how does she put this to use?"[39] Colley, Hancock and Hull came up with a resourceful and do-able solution:

> This is where the involvement of the Saskatchewan Homemakers' [Clubs] came in. It was suggested to the Homemakers' [Clubs] that if a woman took 60 hours of sewing classes that she should be eligible to receive a treadle sewing machine courtesy of the

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[34] (Hancock) Berg, 10 September 1998.
[35] *Ibid.*
[36] Hull, 13 May 1998.
[37] Hull, 6 May 1998.
[38] (Hancock) Berg, 10 September 1998.
[39] *Ibid.*

> Saskatchewan Homemakers' [Clubs].[40] This was how it got started.[41]

A vigorous writing campaign began by Extension Specialists soliciting Saskatchewan Homemakers' Clubs around the province for donations of money and sewing machines. Homemakers' Clubs, which were formed in Saskatchewan in 1911, focussed on elevating women's traditional roles in the home and in the community. Women who joined Homemakers' Clubs were typically rural women who "...wanted to improve their homes. Thus, they joined this group in order to learn new ideas and new skills in homemaking".[42] These Homemakers' Clubs contributed greatly to the Sewing Machine Project as established by Extension specialists. By 1972, Extension had collected $5,649.18, and presented over 263 new machines and 91 sewing kits - all of which was donated by various Homemakers' Clubs in the province.[43]

The presentation of the sewing machines became an opportunity for celebration which, Hancock believed, brought the two communities together and provided a place of social exchange. A typical sewing machine presentation, which seemed to promote the transcending of

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[40] The machines that were awarded were all treadle machines as some/most of the reserves did not have electricity.

[41] (Hancock) Berg, 10 September 1998.

[42] Georgina M. Taylor, "'Should I Drown Myself Now or Later?' The Isolation of Rural Women in Saskatchewan and Their Participation in the Homemakers' Clubs, the Farm Movement and the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, 1910-1967" in Kathleen Storrie, ed., *Women, Isolation and Bonding - The Ecology of Gender* (Toronto: Methuen, 1987) 81-83.

[43] Sewing Machines For Indian Women - 1965-1972 (report). University of Saskatchewan Archives: RG II s.4 B 31.Q.iii. Sewing kits included sewing equipment such as needles, scissors and thread.

culture and class for a gendered social event, began by Colley's husband, Walter[44], delivering the refurbished machines from his truck

> ...after the one-day workshops. We would try to build in presentations of machines. So if we had a group of women on one particular reserve and they had come to the classes and qualified for a machine then we would round up machines - both new and used - and take the machines and have an afternoon with the class and the instructor and we would give out the machines and they would feed us lunch. It became a social kind of thing. We would laugh and exchange stories and had genuine good times.[45]

However, Walter not only delivered but also refinished many sewing machines for the women taking the program.[46] Colley explained that:

> He didn't get paid for this - and didn't really want to either. After he refinished and fixed up these old machines, we [Walter and Anne] took the machines to a reserve on our truck. The machines that Walter fixed were very precious to the women - they told us so. These machines stayed in the family. All together, Walter restored 324 machines and delivered them to 52 reserves.[47]

The fact that Extension Specialists were so committed and willing to get their families involved in their work demonstrates the extent to which the program effected them.

Some of the responsibilities that the instructors took on were not as enjoyable as the Sewing Machine Project. For example, the instructors learned about some of the social problems in Indian communities with respect to alcohol and violence. Many times, they simply had to deal

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[44] Walter Colley died in 1971.

[45] (Hancock) Berg, 10 September 1998.

[46] Many of the Homemakers Clubs also donated used treadle sewing machines for the Program.

with the problem at hand. Hancock also acted as a trouble shooter for the program and witnessed some of the social problems on reserves at close glance.[48] Hancock disclosed this story:

> One of the instructors we had, Elizabeth[49], learned to knit in prison. She was in prison because she was in a knife fight and had cut some tendons in one hand and so because of this previous injury she had to hold the needles differently but she was very efficient at it. She was quite a character. She was one of the ones who would need a letter from us because she never had any money. Some of the instructors would take money left over from the previous class and use it to buy supplies for the next class. But, finally we had to drop Elizabeth because she had gotten herself into trouble. When she would check into a hotel, the hotel would phone me and I would say, "Yes, Elizabeth is teaching the class, pay for her hotel and give her supper but if she asks for money, don't give her any because then she will go to the bar". This was simply one of the problems that had to be dealt with and I was the one who dealt with it.[50]

For Hancock, stories about women such as Elizabeth demonstrated to her the problems in Indian communities and the fact that, as Geoffrey York so bluntly stated, "the drinking, the crime, and the violence come from the fact that there's nothing to do".[51] But, while lamenting these problems, the instructors spent little time attempting to determine why these problems arose and more time trying to find temporary solutions to deal with them.

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[47] Colley, 14 July 1998. Please note that Colley's recollection as to the number of sewing machines delivered is different from the number reported in the printed documents.

[48] (Hancock) Berg, 10 September 1998.

[49] 'Elizabeth' is a pseudonym used to protect the privacy of the woman in this story.

[50] *Ibid.*

[51] Geoffrey York, *The Dispossessed: Life and Death in Native Canada* (London: Lester & Orphen Dennys, 1989) 142.

Not all discoveries, though, reflected social ills. The Homemaking instructors also uncovered traits such as ingenuity and resourcefulness within the Indian community. Colley recalled that in the later 1960s and early 1970s, the Indian men would give their wives money so that they could make dresses and sell them because the men knew people liked them so much.[52] She also remembered that one Indian woman had sold her work and doubled her profit. Colley, at first, did not know that many of them were "smart like this" but "...this woman made an impression on the rest of the ladies and this encouraged them to do the same."[53] Although the comments are positive, they reflect the stereotypical representation of Indian women.

Many cultural traits and features were also uncovered because of the contact zone throughout the course of the Indian Homemaking Program: "We definitely learned about cross-cultural awareness".[54] For example, the instructors soon found humour and having a sense of humour to be an integral part of Indian culture: "Humour was extremely important: if somebody made a goof or something awkward was said it was dealt with...they saw humour in things we didn't."[55] Joke-telling was discovered to be pivotal in the culture. Colley disclosed that many of the women frequently told jokes: "very dirty jokes...but I grew to understand that this was part of their sense of humour and that they were very comfortable with things."[56] Hancock also recalls humour being central to the culture: "The people that we dealt with had a great sense of

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[52] Colley, 14 July 1998.
[53] *Ibid.*
[54] (Hancock) Berg, 19 October 1998.
[55] *Ibid.*

humour and could find fun in little things."[57] This affection for humour also made its way into areas around problem-solving. Hancock noted that frustration was often replaced by humour in difficult situations: "We discovered that Indians had a sense of humour and we learned how they saw problems."[58]

The lack of punctuality, sometimes referred to as Indian time, was another difference that the instructors discovered.[59] For example, Hancock and Colley

> ...very quickly found out that a 12 o'clock lunch often meant 2 o'clock. It took us a little while to catch on to this. They won't start the cooking until you are there - just in case you don't show up because we have a history of telling Native people we were going to do something and not follow through with it. It took time to develop that trust; then they would start to show up. And we found that as the years went on, if we went back to a certain reserve, they tended to be there on later visits - but never at the time they originally said.[60]

This disregard for Euro-Canadian notions of time continued to surface throughout the program and rather than antagonise the relationship between the Indian women and the instructors, Hancock and Colley embraced the Indian tradition:

> They are very laid back. We would suggest that the classes be from 9am to 4pm but if they ran the classes from 10am to 5pm we didn't care. We were not laying down hard and heavy perimeters - we couldn't - they weren't going to follow them anyway. It took us

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[56] Colley, 14 July 1998.

[57] (Hancock) Berg, 10 September 1998.

[58] (Hancock) Berg, 19 October 1998.

[59] An affectionate term used to describe the lax attitude toward time in First Nations culture. Events start not at a certain time, but rather, when everyone gets there. The concept of 'Indian Time' has been explained to me many times.

[60] (Hancock) Berg, 10 September 1998.

> a while to figure out the fact that we had to work the way *they* wanted to work [emphasis added]. You could teach them how to do it and give them suggestions but they had to find their own way. And we found that to be just fine. We had to do what we had to do and that meant making adjustments to things we were used to. That was quite fine with us.[61]

Other ways of adapting to and even adopting parts of Indian culture were fine, too. And the Extension instructors soon discovered that there were skills and qualities they learned and acquired from Indian women. The realm of food offered an opportunity for instructors to learn some hands-on skills as taught by Indian women. For example, as Hancock noted:

> We also learned from them. We asked them to teach us how to make bannock. This gave them confidence in how to instruct and we learned, too. We didn't know anything about it and they thought that was great! So then we would use that as one of our demonstrations for the instructors we were teaching to teach us. And, from this, we would find out from them what sorts of foods were made available and what sorts of foods they ate and enjoyed.[62]

What is interesting about this passage is what food represented.[63] Food became one of the venues in which the instructors were able to learn about and appreciate Indian culture. This

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[61] *Ibid.*

[62] *Ibid.*

[63] As V.J. Korinek and F. Iacovetta suggest: "Food, of course, has always been about more than food, about more than recipes, nutrition, and eating. It can also be about power, about shaping and reshaping behaviour, transforming the class, and gender norms and conventions of everyday life, of inculcating hegemonic values and standards of respectability.... Forced to consider our own eating habits and the food we purchase, cook, and consume most people would claim that these decisions were solely a matter of personal preference and choice. However this 'choice' overlooks the ways in which our tastes are informed, prescribed, or mediated by the government, educational and social service agencies, multinational food corporations and the mass media. Equally important - our ethnic, racial, class, regional and religious identifiers affect how we interpret and respond to the discourse and politics of food. The culture of food is central to celebrations, traditions and ethnic identification." See V. J.

is possibly due to the nature of food. White instructors felt competent in the kitchen and were most likely very receptive to learn in an environment in which they already had a great deal of knowledge. Also, food is a fairly safe aspect of tradition to learn. Usually, the preparation and consumption of food does not require lavish ceremony to prepare or consume. Food in Indian culture, as in many cultures, represents sharing and friendship and this seems to be the spirit in which it was delivered and most definitely the spirit in which it was taken.

Other cultural discoveries included traditional concepts of family and the importance of the power and presence of women in Indian culture. Hancock observed that, "In many ways, the women ran the homes."[64] As well, one of the evaluation documents noted that, "Women are the ones that get things going".[65] These observations seem to be consistent with what Mohawk Patricia Monture-Angus says of traditional Indian societies when she says that "Grandmother made the rules, Grandfather enforced them."[66] Monture-Angus further states that, "To be traditional does not mean to live in the past."[67] The power and presence of Elders was

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Korinek and F. Iacovetta, "The Politics of Food" (unpublished Conference Paper, 1997) 1, 19. Used with permission from the authors.

[64] (Hancock) Berg, 19 October 1998.

[65] "Evaluation of Homemaking Courses on Indian Reserves", 1969, 37.

[66] Patricia Monture-Angus, "Considering Colonialism and Oppression: Aboriginal Women, Justice and the 'Theory' of Decolonization in *Native Studies Review* Volume 12, Number 2, 1999: 87. For Monture-Angus, "traditional" does not necessarily mean "historic" but ways in which Indian societies operated before contact, and relates to ideas such as egalitarianism between men and women. Monture-Angus also argues that contemporary Indian communities can be "traditional" if they follow the teachings and traditions of their people. She states that, "I use the word, traditional, to refer to those Aboriginal Peoples who strive to understand the ways of life as they were originally given to us." See Patricia Monture-Angus, *Journeying Forward: Dreaming First Nations Independence* (Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, 1999) 29. Monture-Angus also goes on to say: "This is another well kept myth. The values and ways of Aboriginal cultures are as viable today as they were centuries ago".

[67] *Ibid.*

also clear and speak to ideas surrounding Indian tradition. The fact that "Elders were respected in the community" was abundantly clear to the instructors based on the treatment and respect they received from community members.[68]

Overall, the instructors discovered that "...there were many instances when Indians helped us and were like us and they were very nice and just like normal people."[69] Although these comments seem innocent, embedded deep within them is a sense of superiority: The instructors recognised their common humanity, but they assumed that Euro-Canadians were the standard against which the Indians should be judged.[70] Also embedded in this is the focus on commonalties between and among women and the tendency to define this as womens' culture. Clearly, there are similarities and commonalties between women -- a universality, so to speak. But, it seems that the instructors focussed on these similarities and while they took note and responded to difference, their most enduring and adamant convictions and memories, largely based on challenges to previously conceived stereotypes, were regarding sameness. Perhaps, though, focussing on similarities and commonalties is a way of responding to difference. And, as Razack notes, it is always interesting to study what "...the eyes of the dominant group see when they encounter subordinate groups" and it seems that sameness was what was observed in

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[68] *Ibid.*

[69] Hull, 6 May 1998.

[70] Perhaps they did not want to see the differences for then they would have to challenge their own position of privilege.

the case of the Indian Homemaking Program.[71] In the case of the White instructors, however much they were effected by and learned about Indian culture, it seems safe to say that their own dominant cultural norms were kept in place. This is evidenced by the fact that, for example, the women continued to instruct the classes in English and teach European-style patterns and clothing.

However, that is not to say that the program did not impact the instructors at all. In fact, the contact that the Extension instructors had with Indian communities, and women in particular, drastically changed their preconceived notions about Indian people. "After the initial worry about what would happen here and what would happen there, after the five years of doing this, we had no trepidation about going."[72] They enjoyed the friendships they developed while instructing. Many of the instructors still keep in contact with the women they met while in the program. As Berg notes: "The key is that we shared more than we did not share."[73] The program also forced the instructors to realise and come to terms with their own racism. They truly saw their experiences as illuminating and could witness, with more objectivity, how the dominant society considered Indian people. Hull believed that "No one gives them the credit they should have."[74] She remembered reading about Indians in school and that the textbooks portrayed them as savages and that this stereotype remained with her until her experiences in the program

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[71] Razack, *Looking White People in the Eye*, 16.
[72] (Hancock) Berg, 10 September 1998.
[73] (Hancock) Berg, 19 October 1998.
[74] Hull, 6 May 1998.

allowed her to re-evaluate those stereotypes.[75] And as for the instructors' time spent on the reserve with Indian women, they "...thoroughly enjoyed it -- they were marvellous times."[76] What the instructors observed about Indian women and Indian culture is just as much of a commentary about them as it is what they observed.

The instructors also realized that they themselves were good at what they did and this was demonstrated in the positive responses and friendships they developed with Indian women. Hull's teaching philosophy of "Tell them what you're gonna show them, show them, tell them what you've shown them, and if there's any questions, do it again" seemed to be successful.[77] And the instructors no doubt benefited personally from the experience. For example, Hull did television appearances for Home Economics teaching through CFQC Television, Saskatoon. And, Colley was invited by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development in the 1970s to write a federal manual with respect to teaching Homemaking on Indian reserves.[78] She was also sponsored by the Extension Division at the University of Saskatchewan to be inducted into the Saskatchewan Agricultural Hall of Fame and she received the award that same year. In 1970, she was awarded one of six awards for community work from the Saskatoon Young Women's Christian Association for her work in the Indian Homemaking Program.[79]

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[75] *Ibid,*

[76] Colley, 14 July 1998. This quotation was the inspiration for the title of this thesis.

[77] Hull, 13 May 1998.

[78] Colley, 14 July 1998.

[79] Anne Colley, letter to author, 17 April 2000.

The program clearly had an impact on the instructors on many different levels. First, the program impacted them personally and allowed them to understand and appreciate the uniqueness of Indian culture and destroy some of the stereotypes they had acquired previous to the program. And second, the program impacted them professionally as they were all acknowledged and rewarded, in some form or another, for their teaching in Indian communities.[80] It seems that the instructors' experiences, although created from a very brief period of a five-year contact zone, affected them on very long term and permanent basis as is evidenced by their fond memories and detailing of those experiences.

[80] This is worth pondering as well. Were the instructors rewarded for being seen as being brave to venture out into Indian country or were they rewarded for their role as small colonizers or was it a combination thereof?

CHAPTER FOUR

Passing the Grade, Passing the Torch and Passing Away: The Success and Demise of the Program

Although the five-year service contract between the Extension Division and the Indian Affairs Branch was to be fully realised on 31 March 1972, a one-year extension "...was granted to continue with the 1972 training workshop...and to prepare a comprehensive evaluation of the total program."[1] The fact was toward the end of the program, as Indian women became more involved as students in the Homemaking program, they and their non-Indian instructors began researching various avenues for Indian women themselves to instruct the program. Seemingly, this was the ultimate goal of the Homemaking program: to promote and create self-sufficiency in Indian communities and to have Indian women directly employ the skills they had acquired throughout the program. In fact, "...as Indian women became trained as instructors, the non-Indian instructors were gradually phased out."[2] Although this seemed to bode well for the Indian participants of the program, Extension instructors were left with mixed feelings about the program. Even though they were well aware of their obligation to choose and train Indian women to eventually take over their positions as instructors, they also felt that various unrelated obstacles contributed to the fact that the Extension contract was not renewed.

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[1] "Evaluation of Homemaking Courses on Indian Reserves", 1973, University of Saskatchewan Archives, RG.x.11.6-SI, page 4. The original service contract was signed September 1967 (retroactive to 1 April 1967) and ended on 31 March 1972.

The Extension instructors immediately recognised that Indian women would and could best serve as communicators with other Indian women. However, the selection of potential Indian instructors was not easy.[3] A 1973 Comprehensive Report entitled, "Evaluation of Homemaking Courses on Indian Reserves", written by Colley and Hancock, reported that it was difficult.[4] The instructors believed that with regards to the selection of Indian instructors:

> The identification of suitable candidates to train as instructors proved to be one of the most difficult problems in the beginning of the project. The Extension Division staff had very little contact with native peoples on reserves or in predominantly native communities, so initial nominations were requested from band councils, community health workers, vocational counsellors, public health nurses, and from the few Indian Homemaker's Clubs still active in the province. As the project proceeded, newly trained instructors nominated other suitable candidates who would meet the qualifications which were considered desirable. Basically, candidates nominated were mature women who would be acceptable as instructors on their own neighbouring reserves; who already had some knowledge, skill and experience in the subject matter which they chose; and who were reasonably free to devote thirty hours of teaching time intermittently as requests were received for particular courses. An effort was also made to get a more or less equitable distribution over the province, so that instructors could be assigned to fill a request without having to travel too far from home. Letters were received from time to time from Indian women or band councils asking for instructors on each reserve and, while this would have been the ideal situation, the constraints of budget would not allow the training and supervision of 150 or more instructors.[5]

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[2] *Ibid,* 5.

[3] *Ibid,* 6.

[4] *Ibid,* 5. The 1969 report was also written by Colley and Hancock.

[5] *Ibid,* 5- 6.

To prepare Indian women for the role of instructors, Extension instructors held a series of workshops through the College of Home Economics, at the University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon campus. These workshops were typically held in the month of April, after regular session university classes had been completed, and were approximately one week in duration.[6] The newly chosen Indian instructors travelled to Saskatoon for the course and

> ...the trainees were housed in University residences and were separated into groups according to the level of training required. For several years...up to eight trainers have been used so that the women were trained in groups of four or five in their chosen subject matter. During the forty-hour program, thirty-two hours were spent on learning and reviewing the subject matter, and the remaining eight hours on how to organise and teach adults. Reporting procedures, course content changes, new subject-matter courses, and organisational problems were included and discussed regularly in each workshop. Expenses for the instructors' travel and accommodation [were] paid by the Indian Affairs Branch each year.[7]

After such courses, Hull, Hancock and Colley assumed that Indian women were prepared to instruct in the program. However, they soon discovered that many extenuating circumstances often prohibited newly trained Indian instructors from being able to fulfil their responsibilities as instructors. An instructor was often unable to teach due to the arrival of a new baby in the family: either hers or part of her extended family. Transportation was often a problem: Indian people, and especially women, constantly faced transportation difficulties and the acquisition of a reliable vehicle as a constant challenge. Occasionally, Indian instructors had difficulty

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[6] *Ibid*, 7.

achieving the ten required minimum students for a course. And, finally, the Extension instructors often discovered that Indian women, as they saw it, had a "lack of confidence to face a group of their peers."[8] In comparison, Hull, Hancock and Colley did not have to overcome these hurdles as their Indian counterparts had to.

The Extension instructors recognised these challenges and did their best to accommodate the particular needs of Indian women. In fact, Extension instructors were quite resourceful with respect to adjusting to the specific needs of Indian women. For example, women who displayed a lack of confidence in teaching were not automatically expelled from the program. They were invited often two or three more times to subsequent training sessions to improve their teaching abilities.[9] Sometimes this proved cumbersome for the instructors, as not all Indian women progressed throughout the training program at the same speed and intensity. However, the Extension instructors adapted, improvised and tailored the program and, "As a result, small groups [were] at various stages in their sequential training, and a trainer [was] assigned to each group for the appropriate advancement from beginner to advanced training in each subject matter."[10]

Guiding Indian women through the training program was not the only amendment the Extension instructors made to keep Indian women interested. Other special services were also

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[7] *Ibid.*
[8] *Ibid*, 8.
[9] *Ibid.*
[10] *Ibid.*

developed. Support, in its various forms, proved crucial and fundamental to the survival of Indian women as instructors in the program. In turn, these support services were seen to develop confidence and trust in the administrators of the program.[11] For example, "Following the training workshop on campus, instructors returned home with a certificate stating their subject matter area and competence. They were [also] provided with course outlines with supporting reading material, posters and visuals to help them in their teaching assignments."[12] As well, a newsletter was also implemented and distributed to all Indian instructors. These newsletters kept Indian instructors current with respect to personal and professional news.[13] Finally, collect telephone privileges were also available to the Indian instructors to encourage contact with the Extension Division. If an instructor was faced with an "urgent problem requiring advice or a decision from the administrative office", she could contact Extension collect.[14] Although these devices show considerable initiative taken by Extension to allay fears and cement positive relations grounded in and by trust, one has to wonder how practical some of the support services were. For example, how credible was a certificate of achievement for women who often could not read? How valid was a newsletter containing personal news to a group of people who depended upon the expedient moccasin telegraph? And, finally, how convenient was collect phoning for women or communities who did not have access to a telephone? It seemed that although these various

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[11] *Ibid.*
[12] *Ibid.*
[13] *Ibid.*
[14] *Ibid.*

support systems were obviously well detailed and considered, they seemed to be representative of what White women with access to these conveniences would have appreciated. Hence, the reaction of Extension instructors to the daily life of Indian women provides an interesting commentary on class and cultural differences and the inability of the instructors to deal appropriately with these differences.[15]

Despite their challenges, Indian instructors, in the "Evaluation of Homemaking Courses on Indian Reserves", identified three separate, yet interrelated reasons for their enjoyment at delivering the programs. First, they saw that the acquisition of new skills and the passing on of these new homemaking skills helped women in their own community and in neighbouring communities. Second, they saw their role as instructors as an opportunity to gain new friends and extend kinship ties in their community and in neighbouring communities. And third, they recognised their ability to generate extra income.[16] Although they acknowledged that they would be out of a job in Indian Homemaking Instruction, Extension instructors helped to facilitate teaching of Indians by Indians as that was the final goal of the program. They believed that the employment of Indian instructors had many spin-off benefits. According to the "Evaluation of Homemaking Courses on Indian Reserves," the instructors felt that as a result of Indian women

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[15] Recognizing the realities of life on reserves where education was often limited and there were few, if any, modern conveniences.

[16] "Evaluation of Homemaking Courses on Indian Reserves", 1972, 80.

instructing, Indian women gained "... confidence in themselves and to display leadership roles in [their] communities".[17] The document also reported that:

> Indian women have increased their participation in community affairs, such as serving on sport and recreation committees and joining handicraft and homemaker's [sic] clubs. More women have been elected to band councils. Some have taken on roles of band administrators, health workers, teachers' aids, and band secretaries. They have learned to be more outgoing and can speak up for themselves. Instructors from one or two areas, however, indicated they felt there has been no change in women participating in community affairs that could be directly attributed to the Homemaking program....[18]

Extension instructors saw that the program had achieved and realised the goals set out in its early infancy. They saw themselves as responsible for supposed improvements in areas ranging from food buying habits to increased involvement in band politics. Clearly, the instructors saw the program as having a long and far-reaching impact on the lives of Indian women. While it is unclear as to how and if it was the program that was responsible for such changes, noting such changes justified the existence of the program in the first place and allowed the instructors to turn their interests and education into employment.

Due to the seemingly highly positive results of the program, Extension recommended its continuation in its "Evaluation of Homemaking Courses on Indian Reserves" report written in 1973.[19] Their recommendation was echoed by Indian groups. Prior to the filing of the report, the

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[17] *Ibid,* 81.

[18] *Ibid,* 81.

[19] "Evaluation of Homemaking Courses on Indian Reserves", 1972, 95.

Saskatchewan Indian Women's Association (S.I.W.A.) expressed a keen interest in assuming responsibility for the Homemaking program.[20] The "Evaluation of Homemaking Courses on Indian Reserves" Report further recommended that the "...administration of the program be transferred to the Saskatchewan Indian Women's Association over a one-year period to be completed by April 30, 1974."[21] They also recommended that "...the contract between the Department of Indian Affairs and the Extension Division, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, be extended by one year with added provision[s] for working out with S.I.W.A. a process for transfer of responsibility, for supervision of transfer of responsibility to the Saskatchewan Indian Women's Association, and for training a project administrator to assume the administrative responsibilities."[22] Other recommendations included that S.I.W.A. would have a continuing mentoring role with Extension and that young Indian women, through S.I.W.A., would be encouraged to participate in the program.[23]

However, these recommendations were never fully realised. In reality, those associated with the program simply seemed to lose interest in it until the program was eventually and unofficially terminated a few years later. Homemaking instructor Anne Colley witnessed this demise of the program after it was handed over to Indian control. She suggested that the demise of the program occurred for several reasons. First, Colley noted that there was a widespread

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[20] *Ibid,* 95.
[21] *Ibid.*
[22] *Ibid.*
[23] *Ibid.*

belief within the Extension Division that after five years of teaching Indian women skills relating to domesticity, Indian women could "carry it themselves."[24] Extension instructors questioned why the University, through Indian Affairs, should pay them when they could and did teach Indian women to do it themselves.[25]

Second, although S.I.W.A. was clearly interested in assuming control over the program and in fact approached Extension Division about this possibility, Colley saw a more complicated, gender-related twist in this scenario. Colley believed that it was Indian men in the communities that encouraged the women to become involved in the program. She suspected that men wanted to receive the money directly from Indian Affairs -- hence blocking out the University of Saskatchewan and its probable system of financial accountability. Colley thought that - Indian men believed if they received funds directly from Indian Affairs, then they could do with the money as they wished.[26] She believed that "poor money management ran the program into the ground even though the students were very responsive to the teachings of money management in [Colley's] classes."[27]

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[24] Anne Colley, interview by author, 14 July 1998.

[25] *Ibid.*

[26] *Ibid.*

[27] *Ibid.* This interpretation of the money-managing aspect of the program seems to echo modern-day fears expressed by Indian women regarding patriarchy in Indian communities. It is now no secret that since contact, Indian women have lost their positions of authority within their communities. In fact, the old adage of "Grandmother made the rules and Grandfather enforced them" is difficult to locate in many post-war Indian communities. (See Patricia Monture-Angus, "Considering Colonialism and Oppression: Aboriginal Women, Justice and the 'Theory' of Decolonization in *Native Studies Review* Volume 12, Number 2, 1999: 87. However, this seems to contradict the understanding of traditional Indian communities as ones where the women held positions of power equal to that of men. Sherene Razack suggests that this can be explained by colonialism and the impact of the dominant role of White men in dominant society. She suggests, that "Confronting male domination within Aboriginal

Third, Colley believed that Indian instructors were simply not trained well enough to take on the task of running the program independently. Colley noted that while she and her colleagues had years of education and experience in the field, they expected Indian women to perform the same duties and carry the same responsibilities while only having the experience of the courses themselves. Moreover, she noted that the training courses at the University of Saskatchewan each spring were far too rushed and far too brief for the women to acquire the skills to administer the program. That is to say, that the actual teaching of 'how to teach' was only a few hours in duration.[28]

Fourth, Colley also noted that the success of Indian instructors in the program, which was the basis for the handing over of the program to S.I.W.A., was inextricably linked to the support of Extension. Colley believed that once Extension was removed from the equation, the program fell apart as instructors did not have the avenues in which to seek guidance and advice.[29] And fifth, Colley identified jealousy among and between Indian women and men. For example, as reported in the "Evaluation of Homemaking Courses on Indian Reserves", Indian women were jealous of Indian women who were instructors.[30] Indian men were jealous of men whose wives were instructors. People became jealous of those who were in control of funds. And, children

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communities...[requires] an understanding of how white domination has contributed...." See Razack, *Looking White People in the Eye*, 65.

[28] Anne Colley, interview by author, 28 July 1998.

[29] *Ibid.*

[30] "Evaluation of Homemaking Courses on Indian Reserves", 1969, 32-39.

became jealous of children whose parents were somehow involved in the program.[31] The result of these jealousies was that fewer and fewer women signed up to take the courses once S.I.W.A. took control, as being involved in the program seemed to carry with it more negatives attributes than positive ones. Colley's observations, specifically the observations on jealousy, reflect and represent a keen insight into the social nuances in Indian communities. Jealously is often very much a reality in Indian communities, largely because of the grave educational and financial differences between families and between communities. This aspect of jealousy is seemingly universal to all cultures; yet it is often invisible in Indian culture to those unfamiliar with that culture.[32]

While instructors were left with pleasant memories and positive experiences from the program, they were simultaneously somewhat disillusioned that their roles did not appear to have a long-lasting impact in communities that they had worked so hard to change. One of the Extension instructors even found herself reflecting upon how they as instructors contributed to the ultimate demise of the program.[33] It seems, in this analysis, that it was not acknowledged that the program was fundamentally flawed in that it was based upon Extension courses that were by, for and about White communities rather than Indian communities and that it did not take into consideration differences attributed to class and culture. While the emphasis on failure

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[31] *Ibid.*

[32] As shared with me by Sheldon Cardinal and Patricia Monture-Angus on many occasions during private conversations. Patricia Monture-Angus specifically has told me that this sort of jealousy is the effect of colonization.

seemed to mask the success of the program, Colley did make some observations that acknowledged that the program was one of the first examples and attempts of Indian control of Indian education.[34] Colley also noted that even though there were problems inherent with the administration of the program and the way in which the program was run on the reserves, it was still an overall positive step forward in having Indian women take over the teaching of the short courses.[35]

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[33] *Ibid.*

[34] Colley, 14 July 1998. It is difficult to hypothesize, though, if the program would have retained its structure and popularity if continued to be administered by the Division of Extension.

[35] *Ibid.*

CONCLUSION:

Continuing Post-Colonial Studies

At one level, the Indian Homemaking Program can be appreciated and enjoyed purely as a story of women helping other women. Moreover, from the vantage point of the instructors, working in the program provided unprecedented opportunities for personal development, travel and friendship. However, a further analysis of the Indian Homemaking Program reveals a much more complicated story, one which examines the complexities, ambiguities and tensions in relations between White female instructors and their Indian female students. In its totality, then, the story of the Indian Homemaking Program provides a glimpse into historical relations and the women who occupied these positions.

This sort of approach to history seems to echo more recent and general reactions to Canadian women's history. While studies of women's history in Canada in the 1970s and 1980s have tended to focus on either celebration or victimization, there was clearly a call in the 1990s to move beyond these polarized views of women in history. As Franca Iacovetta and Mariana Valverde believe, "...we are not suggesting that middle-class White women have received too much attention from historians, but, rather, that their experiences should be analyzed rather than celebrated."[1]

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[1] Franca Iacovetta, and Mariana Valverde, "Introduction" in Franca Iacovetta, and Mariana Valverde, eds., *Gender Conflicts: New Essays in Women's History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992) xvii.

Similarly, historian Bill Waiser agrees that experiences should be analyzed rather that celebrated, especially for the case of Saskatchewan history. He suggests that:

> There is also a need for a more detailed examination of Saskatchewan institutions, traditions and activities - from agricultural societies to sports days to circulating libraries. But if these kinds of cultural studies are to offer new insights into the province and its people, they must go beyond the simple recounting of when the first baseball game was held in a particular district or how many women belonged to Homemaker's Clubs during the depression. It is more valuable to know what sporting events meant to a small prairie town or what members of a club talked about at their meetings and hoped to achieve.[2]

This study of the Indian Homemaking Program has followed Iacovetta's, Valverde's and Waiser's injunctions by focussing primarily on the program and its impact on, and meaning to the instructors. It is timely here, then, to summarize the findings and themes evident throughout this thesis.

One of the first themes that becomes evident is the idea of the contact zone; a space wherein cultures could come together and participate in various exchanges.[3] More specifically, though, the nature of the contact that women in the Indian Homemaking Program experienced was that it was new -- that is to say that *these* particular groups of women had not experienced contact with the other in a similar context.[4] As Sherene Razack notes, "...each encounter

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[2] Bill Waiser, "What's Next: The Future and Saskatchewan History' in *Saskatchewan History* Volume 50, Number 1, Spring 1998: 42.

[3] See the "Introduction" for a fuller discussion on Pratt's concept of a contact zone.

[4] Emphasis added. The author acknowledges that, as stated earlier in the thesis, there is a history of Indian-White relations in Canada. However, the author is specifically referring to these two groups of women.

between unequal groups becomes a fresh one, where the participants start from zero, as one human being to another."[5] The nature of the exchanges within this contact zone varied greatly depending upon the players and logistics present. And, as the thesis is keen to point out, what the White women learned and took from their experiences and relations with Indian women is just as important as what Indian women learned about them. For example, as I noted in chapter three, the contact zone promoted specific exchanges such as recipes and language. For the instructors, this meant learning how to make bannock and learning Indian words such as *moonias*. As I noted in chapter three and in chapter four, the program also provided a contact zone in which White women could learn about some of the traits of Indian culture such as the appreciation of humour and the relaxed attitude toward time. For example, the instructors learned early on that humour was often used in Indian culture as a way problem solving. The instructors also learned that Indian people had a relaxed attitude toward time and they found this to be quite different to the typical, regimented and time-oriented scheduling observed by dominant society.

However, learning about Indian culture, from the vantage point of the instructors, was not limited to and by their experiences directly with Indian women. In fact, the instructors' experience in the contact zone led to a second private space, which occurred during their travels, where they could safely discuss their findings and exchanges regarding Indian women. Chapter

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[5] Sherene Razack, *Looking White People in the Eye: Gender, Race and Culture in Courtrooms and Classrooms* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998) 8.

two revealed that the instructors' travels, which were fueled literally and figuratively by their employment with the Division of Extension, enabled them to form a unique community, allowing the instructors to share their experiences and develop deep bonds of friendship. This space also served as a buffer zone, where contact was discussed and was observed from a safe, controlled and intermediary environment occupied solely by the dominant group. What is obvious about this space, is that it was occupied only by White instructors. Indian women were not privileged to the space which discussed and analyzed their lives. This space provided a vantage point for what Sherene Razack calls the "White female gaze."[6] The instructors talked about Indian women doing normal things, being clean just like White women, putting Indian designs on clothes, and being just like 'us'. That they were largely unconscious of their privileging White values and norms should not negate the fact that they had a privileged position by virtue of their Whiteness. They were in a position of looking in and at Indian women. More often than not, Razack notes, this gaze "sustains rather than disrupts white supremacy."[7] This thesis discovers that the instructors seemed to judge Indian women according to their own values, morals, ethics and upbringing and used their own Whiteness as the ideal against which Indian women were measured.

A second theme that becomes apparent throughout the thesis is the complex concept of identity, in particular, the intersection of culture, class and gender. While much of the discussion

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[6] *Ibid,* 15.
[7] *Ibid.*

and reaction of the instructors seems to focus on the differences between themselves and the Indian women, these differences were duly noted only in terms of Indian-ness. The instructors, in fact, did not seem to pay homage to how categories such as class or culture impacted identity, difference and what they saw as Indian culture. As explained in chapters two and three, the instructors emphasized similarities between themselves and Indian women based on gender and attributed differences only to culture. For example, the instructors relied heavily on emphasizing similarities between experiences such as child rearing which they saw as universal to all women. However, it seems unlikely that such experiences would be similar, given the class and cultural differences between Indian women and White women.[8] While the instructors seemed to want to connect with the Indian women on a purely woman-to-woman level, the task of isolating gender from culture is not always easy. It was difficult for them to fathom the idea that culture and class, for example, do affect the formation and identity of gender within communities.[9] The instructors did acknowledge, at times, the position of power that Indian men held in Indian communities (as noted in chapter four), but there are no further comments provided on this topic. It is also interesting to note that in the study of the Indian Homemaking Program, some social categories, such as culture, seem to take privilege over others, such as gender, in the testimony of

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[8] From my own experiences as a single White woman raising a son whose father is a Treaty Indian, I have observed the differences in parenting as seen in the dominant society, of which I am a member, and traditional Indian ways of child rearing.

[9] For a further discussion on the complexity of gender and race and the inability to divide them, see Patricia Monture-Angus, "Ka-Nin-Geh-Heh-Gah-E-Sa-Nonh-Yah-Gah" in *Thunder in My Soul: A Mohawk Woman Speaks* (Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, 1995) 20. Also see the "Introduction" in this thesis for a further discussion on the matter.

the instructors. Clearly, this speaks to the nature of social categories, the tendency to emphasize some, and the habitual nature of overlooking others. It is hoped that this thesis has drawn attention to the fact, as outlined by the post-colonial scholars in the "Introduction", that it is virtually impossible to privilege any one category over another and that any analysis of the intersection of such categories must be done within an historical context.

What is also interesting about the intersection of such terms and categories in this thesis is that the White instructors do not use these terms to describe themselves. That is to say, the instructors' own identity by way of culture class or even gender is frequently omitted from the identity equation. In the discussion of the Indian Homemaking Program as seen by the White instructors, issues regarding culture, for example, seem only to be associated with Indian women, issues surrounding class seem only to be associated with Indian people, and issues surrounding gender do not involve a discussion of either culture or class at all. Scholars Robert Berkhofer and Sherene Razack observe that people in the dominant culture often do not acknowledge that they are members of a certain culture, class or gender and this is also one of the themes of this thesis.

Mackey's discussion of Whiteness, which includes an articulation of the myth of White people as a homogenous group, also brings to light the third theme in the thesis which focuses on issues related to the movement of the dominant group within a perceived social hierarchy. Mackey contends that: "power in such colonial relations is often derived largely from where one is situated in the colonial hierarchy" and that the multiplicity of Whiteness is key to

understanding these fluctuating positions of power.[10] She states that not all White people are the same and that this must be understood when examining social categories.[11] This is undoubtedly the case for the White instructors of the Indian Homemaking Program. While on one hand, the women were in positions of power and dominance over the Indian women whom they instructed, on the other hand, they were in positions of subordination when compared to the positions they held within the male-dominated environment of the Division of Extension, and the university as a whole. For the instructors, their positions within the social hierarchy were constantly in flux and always relevant to the people and groups with whom they interacted.

This discussion of identity, Whiteness and fluctuating positions of privilege leads to the fourth and final theme of the thesis which combines all of the themes discussed thus far: this is the theme of the instructors as benevolent colonizers. What complicates the role of the benevolent colonizer is that it is enacted by individuals who genuinely believed in the importance of their task. The instructors wanted to show Indian women a better life and a better way to live and this was the basis for their colonization -- however inherently judgmental this might appear. However, the persona represented by the female instructors as benevolent colonizers does not conform to the stereotypical image of the colonizer, as noted by Albert Memmi. He writes, "We sometimes enjoy picturing the colonizer as a tall man, bronzed by the

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[10] *Ibid,*

[11] *Ibid.*

sun, wearing Wellington boots...and spreading culture to the nonliterate.[12] In Memmi's description, the stereotypical colonizer is a powerful male. In the study of the Indian Homemaking Program, the female instructors occupied the position of the colonizer and because of their gender, challenge the stereotypical maleness of the colonizers' image. It is also important to note that the female instructors were only powerful when compared to their female Indian and White counterparts. That they did not hold an undeniable position of power in the social hierarchy speaks to the fact that they, using Memmi's terms, were small colonizers: colonizers who were somewhere between the large colonizers and the colonized.

An interesting parallel can be made to the missionary experience in Western Canada in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As Sarah Carter argues, "The missionaries' commitment to an ideal of progress and their faith in human perfectibility gave them confidence that a glorious future was in store for the Indians".[13] Like the missionaries, the Extension instructors did not see themselves as an oppressive or oppressing force. On the contrary, they saw themselves as sincerely helping and educating disadvantaged people. Similar to Carter's study of the missionaries' role in colonization, this study reveals the complex relations underlying colonization. As Winona Stevenson suggests, studies of various missionary literature reiterates the complicated and dual roles such colonizers occupied. In this case, colonial relations of oppression were interwoven with benevolent practices. As a result, the instructors

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[12] Albert Memmi, *The Coloniser and the Colonised* (Boston: Bacon Press, 1965) 3.

could see themselves as helping Indian women and Indian women willingly accepted this assistance (as evidenced by the demand for the courses). It is important to see the Extension instructors, like church missionaries, as one piece in a very large puzzle. Clearly, this contributes greatly to our understanding of the processes and relationships involved in colonization.

Studies of colonization on a smaller scale can also contribute to the overall understanding of the processes of colonization. What is interesting to note about this study of the Indian Homemaking Program is that the image of the benevolent colonizer sharply contrasts with the image of the colonizer in the larger state, economic or religious colonization plans. These studies which focus primarily on federal schemes of assimilation (such as legislation that worked toward enfranchising Indians), the coast-to-coast impact of residential schools and grand themes such as the fur trade and warfare highlight the role of White men and the often aggressive strategies used to assert colonial dominance. Studies such as the Indian Homemaking Program provide unique opportunities to study the impact of colonization on the day to day lives of Saskatchewan women within a specific locality and time, highlighting the intersection of gender and race. Because of the nature of large scale studies of colonization, these sorts of realities may be missed. Studying colonizaiton on a small scale, then, seems to bring to light these missed opportunities.

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[13] Sarah Carter, "The Missionaries' Indian: The Publications of John McDougall, John Maclean and Egerton Ryerson Young" in *Prairie Forum* Volume 9, Number 1, 1984: 82.

Clearly, the issues as articulated in this thesis are complicated. More specifically, ideas and concepts about social categories such as culture, class and gender, and how they complexly interlock within specific historical colonial encounters, is a discussion that has only started. However, it is this complexity that makes studies such as the Indian Homemaking Program so exciting. Although the story of the Indian Homemaking Program at the University of Saskatchewan can be appreciated and enjoyed simply as a story about women teaching women on a purely cursory level, it can also be analyzed and interpreted through this more complex lens as a study that details the complicated and highly asymmetrical interplay of colonization between White instructors and Indian students.

Finally, to study women and colonization also involves studying personal insights and reflections from the perspective of the colonizers. These oral histories can help to enhance our analysis of the past, especially in small case studies, for they can provide us with information and insight on aspects of colonial contact once ignored. It is this complex analysis of small case studies such as the Indian Homemaking Program that will aid in the elimination of the dualities that have previously dominated the discipline. It is hoped that by approaching history as multi-dimensional and multi-faceted, the history of colonialism in Western Canadian history can be seen in light of what it was and is, that is to say, a history of relationships -- and it is the nature of such relationships that they must be appreciated in their historical uniqueness as related to locale

and time in order to fully understand their impact.[14] This study of the Indian Homemaking Program seeks to contribute to that approach. Only then can the discipline of history move beyond creating artificial boundaries in time and space and begin to approach a more complex sense of truth.

[14] As noted in the "Introduction", the goal of this thesis is to provide one side of the story, which, when added to the previous historiography which focuses on the impact colonization had on the colonized, will provide a more complex sense of truth,

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